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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

THE LEBANON

PART 10

January to December 1956

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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING
THE LEBANON—PART 10

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

VL 1011/1

No. 1

LEBANON : ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 1955

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received January 4)

(No. 1. Confidential)

Beirut,

Sir,

January 1, 1956.

I have the honour to submit my report on the Lebanon during 1955, together with an appendix showing the principal events of the year. So far as internal affairs were concerned, there were no outstanding developments: the actors remained the same, the lights only picking out different groupings of politicians at different times. Foreign affairs dominated the period, particularly from September onwards when the prospect of Russian penetration of the Middle East added a sharp new feeling of reality to the apparently interminable and inconclusive posturings of the Arab League. Both the Bagdad Pact and the Egyptian arms deal were seen to threaten Arab unity, in the preservation of which Lebanon is vitally interested: for the survival of Lebanon as an independent State is seen to depend, in the last resort, on its acceptance as such by all the other Arab States. Lebanon continued to play, therefore, the role of an indefatigable peace-maker and intermediary between the other States of the Arab League.

Foreign Affairs

(a) Relations with the West

2. It was on the 28th of September that the general public learned of Egypt's purchase of arms from Czechoslovakia. There was an immediate awareness by thinking people (such as the President and the Minister for Foreign Affairs) of the far-reaching implications of this move; and underneath the popular acclaim with which Egypt's decision was greeted there emerged a growing concern at the dangers latent in the situation. For some years previously the Lebanese had been playing their enforced role of trying to be all things to all men—friendly to the West, trading with the East, endlessly seeking to reconcile conflicting view-points among the Arab States and always anxious to appear not less Arab than the others where Israel was concerned. Now it was brought home to them that they were going to have to face up to some difficult decisions.

3. Earlier, there had been much debate on whether the time had really come to seek safety by joining the Bagdad Pact. When the Turco-Iraqi Agreement was signed in the spring, it looked for a while as if Lebanon might join—both the President and M. Sami Solh (then Prime Minister) were in favour of doing so. But latent distrust of the Turks, propaganda—principally by France and the French-language papers—against Lebanon joining the West via Ankara, and above all Saudi and Egyptian pressures, followed by the unfortunate anti-Greek outbursts in Turkey and finally a change of Ministry all combined to dissuade Lebanon from any such positive step. Neither the President's State visit to Turkey in March nor the Turkish President's return visit to Lebanon in June aroused much enthusiasm for a closer link with Turkey. Fundamentally, Lebanon was against joining the Pact: the time had not yet come for her to renounce the role to which she aspired, as friend to all the Arabs, in return for the doubtful advantage (as she saw it) of a pact with the West. This would link her, it is true, to one Arab State but by so doing would incur sustained hostility from the others. It might possibly also open a serious breach between the Christians who (except for the Communists and fellow-travellers) look West, and the Moslems who are increasingly influenced by the policy of Egypt and Saudi-Arabia. This is a risk which only the clearest and most lasting advantages would allow Lebanon to take.

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4. After the signature of the Turco-Iraqi Pact, increasing pressure was brought to bear on Lebanese affairs by the use of Saudi Arabian money in large-scale bribery, directed not only against Lebanese participation in the Bagdad Pact and in favour of Lebanese adherence to the Saudi Arabia-Egypt axis, but against the President personally and the régime in general. (The President complained to Mr. Macmillan about this when he passed through Beirut on the 23rd of November and asked for assistance in doing whatever was possible to stop it.)

(b) *Relations with the Arab States*

5. Lebanese foreign policy, therefore, continued generally the lines of earlier years. A main principle is to demonstrate that Lebanon is a good member of the Arab League and to refrain from taking any major decision except after consultation with the other States of the League. In particular cases, however, Lebanon sometimes took a slightly different line or gave a slightly different emphasis to an Arab League decision. Thus, the Lebanese delegate to the United Nations was instructed to abstain from voting on a resolution concerning Cyprus, although there was no collective decision by the Arab League to do so. On another front, the Lebanon is much less aggressive than, for example, Syria in applying the decisions of the Arab Boycott Committee. But differences were not allowed to go further than this. Lebanon refused to join the Egypt-Saudi-Syria triangle or even to make a bilateral pact with its neighbour Syria, basing its refusal in both cases on the grounds that it would not take part in any exclusive grouping of Arab States.

6. At the same time Egypt's views carry much weight in Lebanon as Egypt is recognised as the leader of the Arab League; and on the practical plane because of the number of Egyptian tourists who visit the country and the valuable market which Egypt offers for Lebanese exports. There is here, however, a new tendency at work. Lebanese merchants and industrialists are beginning to recognise the rising star of Iraq, although only official Lebanon as yet sees the need of being careful not to oppose Iraqi policies. So far as Syria was concerned, the year saw no progress towards the economic union for which the present Prime Minister has been working so long. After many weeks of negotiation even a purely military agreement could not be reached on the joint use of troops on the Israeli frontier although this only meant putting on paper what had been a tacit arrangement for several years past. Syrian ambition, the instability of the Syrian régime and in particular the influence of the Left-wing sections of the Syrian army inspire mistrust in the Lebanese, whose fortunes are more closely linked with Syria than with any other Arab State.

(c) *Relations with Israel*

7. The Czechoslovak arms deal with Egypt and the increasingly serious incidents on the Israeli frontiers with Egypt and Syria have kept the problem of Israel prominently in the forefront. The welcome given to Sir Anthony Eden's proposals for a compromise solution was friendly; and Lebanon joined with Syria in inviting the Arab States to meet and discuss a reply. So far, however, it has not been possible to arrange a meeting. There is not felt to be any military danger on the Lebanon/Israel border, where things have remained generally quiet. There is a real fear, however, of Israeli economic competition, both commercial and industrial, if a settlement is reached; and it will not, of course, be possible for Lebanon to take a lead in helping to bring about a settlement. There would, however, be certain compensating advantages for the Lebanon in reopening trade with Israel and there is no doubt that Lebanon would follow a lead by Egypt in favour of an overall settlement. This might require a change of Prime Minister; but that should not present any serious difficulty, and will in any case occur with the passage of time.

Internal Affairs

The President

8. The President's actions—or inaction—came in for sporadic criticism during the year. It was inevitable that this should be so. In this country the constitution gives the President certain powers (e.g., over the conduct of foreign

policy and the selection of Ministers in a new Cabinet) and Lebanese tradition and temperament expect the man at the top to rule. Mostly, however, the President seems to the public to be letting things drift. Twice in the course of the year he was moved to hit out publicly at his critics and detractors: in August he took the opportunity of an annual occasion in his native village of Deir el Kamar to summarise his year's achievements and make slighting references to the Opposition; and again in December at a large dinner given by the Association of Industrialists he referred bluntly to "subversive and reactionary" elements in the country. Both times he was criticised for entering the arena of party politics. The first time his status suffered, but the second time the weakness of M. Karamé's Government led to a much wider appreciation of the need for a strong President. In the result he has strengthened his position and the respect in which he is held.

9. Views differ greatly about the President. I myself believe him to be reasonably honest, to be trying to allow the country to develop a democratic tradition of governing itself instead of being ruled by one man or one family, and willing to give the politicians their head as far as he possibly can in the face of much irresponsibility in the Chamber of Deputies. He is often accused of weakness, for example in not forcing through a measure of electoral reform which is admittedly necessary. But I believe he is right to let this come when public opinion feels the present situation to be sufficiently intolerable to force the Government to enact the necessary legislation. Fortunately for us the President has very sensible views about co-operation with the West and about the dangers of the present Russian policy in the Middle East. He has been at all times as helpful to us as he can reasonably be and this has greatly smoothed the course of our dealings with successive Governments. The substantial military assistance which we are now giving to Lebanon is a just recognition of this fact.

The Government

10. M. Sami Solh remained in power as Prime Minister until September (after a partial reshuffle of his Cabinet in July). He had the strength to control the Beirut Sunni Moslems (including "the street") and it is unfortunate that he has been succeeded by a weak co-religionist, M. Karamé, who lacks not only his strength but also his tolerant outlook and his experience of affairs. In his three months of office M. Karamé's Cabinet have no achievements whatever to their credit. It is true that in the last days of the year the Chamber of Deputies approved a proposal to borrow \$27 million from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to carry out the Litani hydro-electric and irrigation project. But this had been under discussion since long before the present Ministry took office. On the other hand the much-needed electoral reform (to double the size of the Chamber of Deputies) hangs fire; and the prospect of successful negotiations with the Iraq Petroleum Company for a new transit agreement have been weakened by the fantastically high claims against the company which have been publicly made by the Prime Minister's supporters. In foreign policy, M. Karamé is a strong supporter of economic union with Syria but has done nothing to advance this proposal. He is narrow and prejudiced where Israel is concerned and refuses to contemplate a compromise settlement such as was mooted by Sir Anthony Eden in his Mansion House speech. M. Karamé wants the United Nations Resolutions or nothing. Lebanese policy about Israel is therefore negative at present—the opposing views of the President and his Prime Minister cancel each other out. M. Karamé is also increasingly showing himself a fanatical Moslem where his powers of patronage are concerned; this is gradually arousing Christian opposition and may well be the cause of his ultimate downfall, more especially as he is confirming his patronage to his fellow-Moslems from his own parliamentary constituency. Neither of the year's two Prime Ministers has had the courage or the determination to carry out, in the face of vested interests, the reorganisation and reform of the judiciary and administration which have been for long accepted as necessary to good government. It is unlikely that M. Karamé's Ministry will last much longer.

The People

11. "We live," as an ex-Prime Minister said to me, "in a state of enjoyable chaos." Whether this applies to the chaotic traffic conditions of Beirut, the lack of control over the mushroom expansion of the capital city, the recurrent but unnecessary water supply and electricity shortages, the weakness and inefficiency of administration, or a multitude else, only a Lebanese would use that particular

adjective to qualify the result. Fortunately there is at present such abounding prosperity on all sides (an indirect result of Middle East oil development) that the social strains of great and obvious inequality in the distribution of the resulting wealth do not at present give rise to serious political problems. Despite a low level of daily wages and an almost complete lack of any of the provisions of a welfare State, there is little unrest and the Communists (in the trade unions, for example) have in general made no headway during the year despite increasing efforts.

The Defence Services

12. Lebanon is fortunate in having an upright and competent Commander-in-Chief, Brigadier-General Fuad Chehab, who both by inclination and sense of duty keeps the army out of politics. The total numbers in the armed forces are only about 6,000, but they are well trained and on the whole well led. They are the final guarantee of internal order and security and are tacitly relied upon as the real support for Lebanese democracy. The Royal Air Force Mission did another year's admirable work in training the small Lebanese Air Force; and a nucleus of a tiny Navy has been created, consisting of three small coastal patrol boats.

Religious Communities

13. Lebanon is a mosaic of religious communities, half Christian and half Moslem. For the first time in the history of the Maronite Church its Patriarch, appointed during the year by the Pope, is a priest who has spent many years in the United States (working among Lebanese emigrants in Los Angeles), who speaks excellent English and is genuinely friendly and understanding. He has already established a considerable reputation with Moslem Lebanon by his appeal to Moslems and Christians to unite against the dangers of materialism—a thinly veiled allusion to the dangers implicit in Russia's incursion into the Middle East. The Armenian Orthodox community, some 50,000 strong and a well-organised, powerful and intelligent minority, have recently chosen Monseigneur Khoren Paroyan as their acting Patriarch; he happens to be a British subject, having been born in Cyprus. He was elected with the help of the anti-Communist Armenian Tashnaqs, and his confirmation as Patriarch would be a most helpful development. It is thus likely that we shall be able to maintain in the future a closer and easier relationship with these two important religious communities than we have in the past. On the other hand, however, the Greek Orthodox Church has shown signs of strong Communist leanings, with the Archbishops of Zahlé and Mount Lebanon as the chief agents of Russian penetration in this Church.

Communism

14. The Russian drive into the Middle East included less spectacular moves than the Egyptian arms deal. The "smile" policy of shortly before and after the Geneva Conference was faithfully carried out: the Soviet Minister could be seen literally practising it at the large charity balls which afflict the Beirut summer season. Vigorous and successful efforts have been made to foster cultural and sporting exchanges with Russia; and increasing sums of money seem to have been available for propaganda of all sorts directed, amongst other targets, against the Bagdad Pact, President Chamoun personally and Sir Anthony Eden's Mansion House proposals. In August the Speaker of the Lebanese Chamber received an invitation to take a party of Lebanese Deputies on a visit to Moscow; and in the same month the chairman of the Press Syndicate was invited to take a party of journalists. Neither of these visits, however, has yet come off—partly because of our efforts to delay them. An attempt, unsuccessful so far, was made through the Polish Consul in Damascus to establish diplomatic representation of Poland in Beirut; what may shortly be achieved, however, is the conclusion of a trade agreement. Despite all this activity it remains true that Communism is not at present a substantial threat to Lebanon. This is so despite the fact that appreciation of the dangers of Communist infiltration does not go very deep and awareness of what Russian domination might be like in practice is limited to very few Lebanese.

Economic

15. The most remarkable aspect of Lebanese economic affairs has been the spate of bilateral trade negotiations. Agreements on commercial exchanges and economic co-operation were signed with France, Italy and East Germany. The agreements signed in 1954 with Czechoslovakia and West Germany were ratified

and that with Russia was renewed. A commercial agreement was signed with Turkey and a \$5 million loan for road construction was offered by the United States. The temporary agreement with Syria was prolonged indefinitely and at the end of the year the Lebanese Government had approved the texts of commercial agreements with China, Poland and Roumania.

16. All this activity and self-professed willingness on the part of other countries to assist Lebanon in her economic development has been unfavourably compared with the attitude of the United Kingdom. Although the value of the United Kingdom's visible exports to Lebanon has materially increased (£7.7 million for the first ten months of 1955 as against £5.3 million for the whole of 1954), opportunities for a closer association with Lebanese development have been lost. A French group obtained the valuable appointment of consultants to the Litani Board and an Italian firm were awarded the contract for the development of Tripoli harbour.

17. Internally, trade has continued to expand and the financial condition of the country remains as sound as ever. It is remarkable that Lebanese Governments have always been able to pursue an effective and wise financial policy but, confronted with the practical problems of operating the State-controlled water and electricity company, have proved to be inefficient administrators. The prolonged public debate, ending finally in a decision to approve the loan contracted from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development to finance the Litani project, revealed a number of other characteristics of Lebanese economic thought. Among them were a dislike of incurring foreign debts, a fear of the machinations of so-called "international Jewry through the International Bank," a mistrust of American motives in recommending (through Point IV) the Litani for development because the river runs close to Israel, and an objection, founded on national pride, to paying what is in Lebanese eyes an excessive rate of interest while at the same time having to permit the International Bank some say in the utilisation of the loan.

18. Successive Governments during the year proclaimed their intention to encourage the investment in Lebanon of foreign capital but nothing was done in practice. On the one hand, no steps were taken to give effect to the threat (made at the end of 1954) that imports from countries which failed to sign economic agreements with Lebanon would be subjected to double tariff. On the other hand, the Government introduced a new insurance law whose terms are likely to induce a number of foreign insurance companies to withdraw from Lebanon and cancelled the decrees exempting three of the companies from income tax. In the last week of the year negotiations began with the Iraq Petroleum Company for a new transit agreement.

19. In these matters, as in so many others, the Government expressed less its own policy than the wishes of powerful local vested interests. There have been no signs of any form of overall governmental economic planning and the so-called Planning Council and the Ministry of Planning have remained totally ineffective.

Tripoli Disaster

20. Torrential rains in the mountains above Tripoli on the 17th of December caused a disastrous flood in Tripoli when the wave of trees, rocks and mud swept down a stream on one side of the town. Between 150 and 200 people were drowned and upwards of 1,000 rendered homeless. Relief has been quick and generous, with the practical assistance of the loan of two Bailey bridges by Her Majesty's Government in addition to a contribution to the relief fund.

Conclusion

21. Lebanon has enjoyed another year of prosperity and has extended her commercial contacts with many countries, including several in Eastern Europe. In domestic politics there was little that was new: the Ministry changed in September but this produced no visible difference in the conduct of domestic affairs. In foreign affairs Lebanon remained a supporter of the Arab League while refusing to be drawn into any exclusive grouping of some only of the Arab States. Lavish expenditure of money by Saudi Arabia, in a country where everything can be bought, had the effect at times of making press and people more xenophobic.

Nevertheless, relations with Great Britain remained good and on a basis of genuine friendliness. This is in part due to the steady goodwill of the President. The new Russian policy in the Middle East is being watched both hopefully—as far as Arab-Israel relations are concerned—and critically.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT,
Chargé d'Affaires.

Enclosure

Summary of Principal Events in the Lebanon, 1955

January

- 6 Exchange of letters between I.P.C. and Lebanese Government to cancel 1952 oil agreement in favour of an identical agreement not subject to ratification.
- 14-18 Visit of Turkish Foreign Minister, M. Menderes.
- 18 Prime Minister announces Lebanese support for Turco-Iraqi Pact.
- 20 Iraqi Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fadil Jamali, visits Beirut.
- 20 Government's full powers to amend decree laws expire.
- 21 Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and Secretary-General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs visit Cairo.
- 31 Chamber of Deputies appoints a commission to study Government's exercise of its full powers.

February

- 1 Visit of British fleet to Beirut (H.M.S.S. *Forth*, *Agincourt*, *Aisne*, *Corunna* and three submarines).
President opens MEDRICO refinery at Sidon.
- 7 Chamber recommends rejection of Johnston Plan for Jordan waters.
- 17 I.P.C. exchange of letters comes into force. I.P.C. pays over £Leb.7 million.
- 18 Chamber votes Budget (£Leb.137.5 million).
- 20 Major Salah Salem arrives in Beirut for discussions with President and Government on Turco-Iraqi Pact.

March

- 2 Visit of United States fleet (aircraft carrier, cruiser, three destroyers, one submarine).
- 10 "National Conference" organised by Kamal Jumblatt passes anti-Iraq and pro-Egyptian resolutions and sets up permanent committee.
- 21 President Chamoun leaves on State visit to Italy and Turkey, in spite of protests by National Conference.
- 24-31 Meeting in Beirut of Syrian and Lebanese economic delegations and extension *sine die* of temporary agreement of March 1953.

April

- 2 Signature of commercial agreement and *modus vivendi* with Turkey.
- 12 President returns from Turkey. Strong security measures taken.
- 13 Prime Minister announces that no secret agreement with Turkey was reached during President's visit; Lebanese policy would be one of mediation.
- 16 Lebanese delegation, led by Prime Minister, leaves for Afro-Asian Conference at Bandoeng.
- 21 Open letter from Maronite Patriarch to President urging neutrality or direct alliance with West.
- 22 American University of Beirut Medical Congress opens, with strong British contingent led by Lord Feversham.
- 29 Signature of Commercial and Economic Co-operation Agreement with France.

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May

- 13 Prime Minister states in Chamber that Lebanon will join neither Turco-Iraqi nor Tripartite Arab Pact.
- 19 Death of Maronite Patriarch.
- 25-26 Conference for the Establishment of an Economic Organisation for the Near and Middle East opens. Saudi Arabia not represented until second day.
- 29 Resignation of Minister of Health and Justice, Dr. Charles Helou.

June

- 2 Appointment of M. Georges Hraoui as Minister of Health.
Ministerial decree authorises establishment of Mideast Air Servicing Co-operation.
- 5 Inauguration of new Maronite Patriarch, Mgr. Meouchi.
- 7 Visit of H.M.S. *Jamaica* and H.M.S. *Diamond*.
- 10 Inauguration of port development project at Tripoli.
- 16-22 Visit of Turkish President to Beirut; minor disturbances.

July

- 8-9 M. Sami Solh resigns and forms new Cabinet.
- 14 Chamber votes confidence in Government by small margin.
- 18 Signature of agreement with the United States for peaceful development of atomic energy.
- 19 Appointment of parliamentary commission to investigate allegations of Government corruption.
- 21 Government forced to withdraw decree raising electricity tariff.
- 24 Prime Minister visits Saudi Arabia.
- 27 Inauguration of work on new highway Beirut-Tripoli.
- 29 Lebanese and Syrian Foreign Ministers meet in Syria.

August

- 3 Resignation (later withdrawn) of Lebanese Commander-in-Chief.
- 6 President's annual address at Deir-el-Kamar.
- 18 Decision, after long controversy, that the immunity of the magistrature should not be lifted but that Conseil Supérieur de la Magistrature should undertake reform.
- 23 Shishakli passes through Beirut.
- 25 International Bank for Reconstruction and Development agrees to loan of \$27 million to Lebanon.
- 26-27 Foreign Minister, Hamid Frangié, visits Cairo.
- Sept. 1
- 31 General strike in sympathy with Moslems of French North Africa.

September

- 2 Joint communiqué by Lebanese Foreign Minister and Egyptian Prime Minister promising joint consultation on foreign policy.
Mr. Eric Johnston arrives in Beirut.
Alarm over incidents in Gaza strip.
Foreign Minister and Finance Minister resign.
- 7 Cabinet resigns.
- 13 M. Karamé forms new Government.

October

- 4 M. Karamé's Cabinet receives vote of confidence in Chamber.
- 5 Mr. Johnston again visits Beirut, with Mr. George Allen, United States Under-Secretary of State.
- 5 Lebanese and Syrian Prime Ministers meet at Chtaura (Lebanon).
- 22 Visit of United States fleet (aircraft carrier *Lake Champlain*, cruiser, destroyers and submarines).

November

- 2 Visit of Communist Chinese Trade Mission to Beirut.
- 3 Arrival of Polish Trade Mission.
- 4 Signature of Commercial and Economic Co-operation Agreement with Italy.

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November

- 6 Trouble in Ahmad-al-Assad's valley at Ghobeiré, police fire, one man is killed and three wounded.
- 7-13 Visit of British minesweeping flotilla.
- 10-17 Encouraging reception given to Sir A. Eden's Mansion House Speech.
- 10 Visit of four United States destroyers.
- 12 Annual revision of Trade and Payments Agreement with German People's Republic.
- 19-26 State visit by King Hussein I of Jordan.
- 23 Mr. Macmillan calls on President, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister on his way back from Bagdad.
- 25 Abortive meeting at Bloudane (Syria) of Syrian Prime Minister and Syrian and Lebanese Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence and Commanders-in-Chief, to discuss a Syro-Lebanese Military Pact.
- 28 Finance Minister resigns.
- 30 Revelation of alleged armed plot by Ahmad-al-Assad against the State.

December

- 1 Arrival of Anwar Sadat, Egyptian Minister of State and Secretary of Islamic Congress.
- 3 President's speech to Lebanese Industrialists Association, attacking opposition, subversion and reaction.
- 5 Arrival of Communist Chinese Trade Mission.
- 17 Serious floods in Tripoli area.
- 17-27 Second Session of Preparatory Conference for Establishment of an Economic Organisation for the Near and Middle East.
- 24 Parliament approves International Bank Loan for Litani hydro-electric project.
- 28 Opening of talks between Lebanese Government and Iraq Petroleum Company for a new oil transit agreement.

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No. 2

**SIR EDWIN CHAPMAN-ANDREWS' FAREWELL DESPATCH
FROM BEIRUT**

Sir Edwin Chapman-Andrews to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received February 22)

(No. 33. Confidential)
Sir,

*Beirut,
February 16, 1956.*

On my departure from this post so soon after the presentation of the Annual Report I hope I may be excused from rendering a detailed account of the present state of the country. Looking back over the past four and a half years, however, and comparing the situation as it then was both in this country and the Middle East as a whole with that which confronts us to-day, some interesting thoughts arise; these I have the honour to express briefly in this despatch.

2. Five years ago King Farouk was on the throne of Egypt, King Abdul Aziz on that of Saudi Arabia and King Abdullah in Jordan. Colonel Hosni al-Za'im was the military dictator of Syria. All these Heads of State have disappeared, two by revolution, one by assassination and one in the ordinary course of nature. Of Lebanon's fellow members of the Arab League, only Iraq has pursued her purposeful and uneventful way. Lebanon herself was not unaffected by these changes and in September 1952 President Bechara el Khoury though enjoying the support of a very substantial majority of the elected Chamber of Representatives (which he had cleverly packed) was run out of office by a popular movement against him, a movement to bring about such reforms as would make it impossible for a future President to abuse his position to the profit of members of his family and his friends. Yet despite this revolution in a tea cup the life of the Lebanon has remained curiously unaffected and, although it can truly be said that "the air was more breathable" after it than before, the structure of Parliament, the courts and the civil administration are not recognisably different now from when I came in 1951.

3. On enquiring into the reason for this, our attention is inevitably turned to the economic situation. Almost everything in this country of merchants, bankers, middlemen, interpreters, brokers, tradesmen and commercial adventurers, boils down in the end to economics. It permeates the life of the Lebanon as it must have done that of Phoenicia, whose cities lay along these same coasts. Lebanese merchants did very well out of the first world war; some making substantial fortunes from those very shortages which caused famine and death in the closing stages of the Turkish collapse. During the second world war an even better opportunity offered and I cannot think of a single Lebanese who at the precise split second did not cleverly leap from one horse to another and like an intrepid circus performer keep his balance, to the plaudits of his fellow countrymen. When, therefore, following the struggle for Berlin, which the Lebanese regarded as a "damned close-run thing," the Korean war loomed large, all Lebanese merchants stocked up in the expectation of selling out gradually when the conflict spread. They were disappointed; and many were brought to the verge of bankruptcy. During this period of the doldrums there was even more unemployment or under-employment than usual (this country like Egypt, though for different reasons, suffers from over-population and under-employment). Business was slack, tempers short and public discontent therefore rife. Looking back I reckon that this was the main cause of Bechara el Khoury's decline and that but for it he would probably have been in power to-day.

4. I think it is equally probable that the boom or wave of prosperity that set in here a year ago is more than half responsible for the strength of President Camille Chamoun's position (by comparison with the decline in his fortunes a year ago). The dominant influence of the economic over the political situation is a singular and persistent feature.

5. But within this framework it can also be said that Bechara el Khoury was far more conscious of his connection with those wartime events that led, with British help, to the emergence of the Lebanon as an independent State. When for example I presented my Letters of Credence to him, although the ceremony lasted

no more than a few minutes, the President found time to recall with gratitude the part Great Britain had played. I very much doubt whether such a thought will enter the head of the present President when receiving my successor. Yet despite this, President Chamoun has proved himself to be much more amenable to our influence than ever Bechara el Khoury was. In this respect the Bechara el Khoury régime was in a sense more in tune with the traditional political role of this country which is to remain on the middle of the fence and to acquire merit by being as useful as possible to both sides. Bechara el Khoury's foreign policy, therefore, came in for no public criticism here. It was being too clever by half with internal contrivances of one sort and another that brought him down. By contrast, President Chamoun's foreign policy, which has been more inclined towards British than French or Arab League ideas, has at times brought a good deal of public criticism down on his head. This, however, strangely enough, has not necessarily weakened his position because in this country where people will always kiss the hand they cannot cut off, for the President to have a strong friend like Britain is an asset. It remains an asset, however, only so long as the friendship is mutual and when there are demonstrable mutual advantages. People can see that President Chamoun has been trying to side with us. They therefore naturally expect to see the material benefits of this policy. To some extent they have been satisfied and recent decisions by Her Majesty's Government, for example to start a boys' boarding school and to furnish arms and equipment on favourable financial terms, have not been without their effect in strengthening the President's hand with his own people. The first decision has been made public and the second has not. Nevertheless the arms have meant that General Chehab and the General Staff, who know all about it, are happier about the President than they were a year ago because they believe that his policy is paying dividends.

6. When I came here five years ago, although I had even then had twenty-five years' service in the Middle East and East Africa and ought therefore not to have been surprised by anything, I was surprised to discover how deeply rooted religious communal differences and distinctions were in this country, which, in this respect, constantly reminds one of a miniature Byzantine mosaic. In a sense it is a country of religious minorities. The Christians claim that they are in the majority, but give the impression that they are whistling to keep their courage up. Even they admit that the 100,000 Palestinian refugees would tip the balance against them. And anyway there is no united Christian front any more than there is a united Moslem one. And on top of all this we have the Druzes and other groups too. All these fragments have historical associations and strong affiliations with friends abroad, the Maronites with France, the Sunnis with Egypt and Arabia, the Druzes with Britain. I think we can say that the Druze association with Britain has worn somewhat thin, but the other two mentioned are still quite strong. British affiliations were naturally changed during our occupation of this country in 1942-43. All sects as a result of this know what sort of people we are. They know, not because their fathers or grandfathers have told them, but because they have seen with their own eyes. I am glad to say that during my five years here nowhere have I heard one single word but of praise for the conduct of our troops as an army and as individuals and for our achievements during the short period when we ran the civil administration.

7. Britain therefore still has in the Lebanon a number of valuable assets. The Lebanese though internationally minded themselves and liking to feel themselves part, as it were, of a multi-coloured mosaic and not of a black-and-white sketch, like to deal, small as they are, on terms of equality with everybody all round. They like to deal with people individually and where they can they like to exploit in their own interests and to their own advantage differences between people. They do not like being confronted with a united group. That is why it is extremely important in this country not to give the Lebanese the impression that international interests, having something in common here, are ganging up against them. That, I think more than anything else, will sharpen the edge of Lebanese nationalism and might even turn it against the very interests we wish to safeguard. This lesson should, I suggest, always be borne in mind in connection with oil transit negotiations. The Lebanon is a small country of just over one million people. The great majority are friendly to the West and could in certain circumstances be of great value to the West. As a bridgehead the Lebanon has strategic importance, its harbours are the best in the Eastern Littoral of the Mediterranean, its international airport is the best in the Middle East (so

that the number of passengers passing through it has increased six-fold during my time here). The Lebanon with its ring of mountains is a natural fortress. In its ports terminate oil pipelines coming from Northern Iraq and Eastern Arabia. Hard businessmen and clever as the Lebanese may be, irritating as they so often are, my own view is that the Lebanese themselves and their country are potential assets to the West and of Great Britain in particular, assets which it is not only well worth while, but in my opinion essential, for us to reinsure, even though the premium in terms of hard cash may seem a rather stiff one.

I have, &c.

E. A. CHAPMAN-ANDREWS.

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No. 3

THE FALL OF RASHID KARAMÉ'S GOVERNMENT

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received March 21)

(No. 50. Confidential)
Sir,

Beirut,
March 19, 1956.

I have the honour to refer to my telegram No. 236 of the 15th of March, 1956, reporting the fall of Rashid Karamé's Government; and to record the following comments.

2. Essentially, any Government of the Lebanon is chosen by the President. It is he who, according to the Constitution, chooses the Prime Minister; and according to constitutional practice it is he who, having made this choice, uses his influence to ensure sufficient support among the Deputies for the chosen one. In September of last year, however, the President for once washed his hands of the choice of Government. He had for some time been under attack from many sides for interfering too much in the day-to-day political affairs of the country instead of maintaining himself aloof as the final source of constitutional authority. The Solh Government had for some time been under attack, largely on the grounds of incompetence and corruption, and the President left it to its fate—to the bitter resentment, incidentally, of M. Sami Solh himself.

3. The new Government was therefore chosen by the Prime Minister designate after negotiations with the Deputies rather than by the President and was therefore necessarily the lowest common factor of a not very inspired body of only 44 elected representatives of the people. Indeed, because the choice was not imposed from above, the only Prime Minister who proved possible among the candidates (who must be Sunni Muslims by constitutional convention) was a young man who, although belonging to a leading Sunni family, had the merit only of being the son of his father. He was not even a native of Beirut, the traditional source of Lebanese Prime Ministers.

4. The problems left unsolved by the Solh Government, however, required for their solution something stronger than M. Karamé and his colleagues. On the domestic front the Government and the legislature stand convicted of sheer inefficiency; and on the foreign affairs front of ineffectiveness. The new Government's programme contained the usual promises of reform but nothing new or basic except a solemn promise to introduce a measure of electoral reform before the end of the year. So far as foreign affairs were concerned, the main proposal was for a united Arab front. In the event, nothing whatever has been heard of electoral reform (which would indeed take a very strong personality to enforce in the face of all the vested interests involved); in foreign affairs the first act of the Karamé Government was to propose steps towards Arab unity at the meeting of the Arab League Foreign Ministers in October last and to be disdainfully rebuffed.

5. M. Karamé did indeed have his own ideas on foreign policy. He is young and inexperienced with leftist ideas and attracted by exponents of similar ideas in Syria. His policy of rapprochement with Syria, however, produced no results and increasingly irritated the Lebanese. This was the more so as Syria became more and more drawn into the Egypt-Saudi Arabia axis and tried to put pressure on the Lebanese to make a similar move. In January attempts by M. Karamé, without the authority of the Lebanese Cabinet, to discuss defence arrangements with the Syrian Prime Minister nearly led to a Cabinet crisis which was only averted by the personal intervention of the President. Attempts to push through a military agreement with Syria repeatedly fell foul of the opposition of the Lebanese Commander-in-Chief and, behind the scenes, of the President acting on and supported by the advice of the Foreign Minister, M. Lahoud. This policy of M. Karamé became increasingly unpopular as pinpricks from the Syrian side increased in the shape of, e.g., public references by the Syrian Minister of Defence to the Lebanese "unfriendly attitude", obstacles placed in the way of transit trade through Syria to Iraq, and suspicions of Syrian "betrayal" over oil transit dues, to which I refer below. The Government's latest mistake in the realm of

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foreign affairs was the despatch of the Foreign Minister to Saudi Arabia at the end of February to improve relations between the two countries, as a result of which the Foreign Minister was unwise enough to sign a joint communiqué which contained an obvious implied criticism of Iraq, so departing from the policy of neutrality which the Lebanon has been increasingly forced to follow. This seriously embarrassed the President.

6. The attempt to reach an agreement with the Iraq Petroleum Company on oil transit dues has also recoiled on M. Karamé's head. The agreement signed between the I.P.C. and Syria in December last gave rise to most extravagant hopes of similar proportionate increases in payments to Lebanon. Though these claims were completely unfounded, they were in no way controlled or contradicted by the Government. M. Karamé, with every appearance of popular support, took a strong line with the I.P.C. negotiators and finally broke off negotiations, only to find that the more responsible elements in the Lebanon were by no means behind him, and that even his previous enthusiastic supporters began to turn on him with accusations of rashness and precipitancy. A further result of this was a widespread realisation that little could be hoped of Syria by way of co-operation in this dispute; this also contributed to the weakness of M. Karamé's position.

7. His Government has continued in office longer than most people expected, and the President has indeed been accused here and there of indecision and weakness in allowing it to remain. He has been content, however, to give the Government rope enough to hang itself and has preferred that the cause of its departure should not be an issue of foreign policy, where his own responsibility would be involved and where the fall of the Government might have serious repercussions. There has been strong criticism all along of M. Karamé's handling of domestic affairs. Apart from allegations—and obvious proof—of inefficiency, an attenuated Chamber failed to get down to serious discussion of its many pressing domestic problems, or even, on many occasions, to produce a quorum. Progress in reform of the judiciary, already a burning topic when the Solh Cabinet was in office, has not been made. No measure of electoral reform has even been proposed. The Government was weak in the face of attacks on the proposed \$27 million loan (from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) for the development of the Litani hydro-electric project, and the then Finance Minister resigned on the grounds that insufficient study had been given to the project. In fact he was the sort of Finance Minister who was not likely to accept responsibility for any controversial measure; but M. Karamé's reputation did not benefit from the unsuccessful efforts he made to find a new Finance Minister to join his already discredited team. The Cabinet did not have the courage to stand up against the opponents of increased charges for State electricity, even though these had been justified by an independent expert finding after a previous reference backed by the Legislature.

8. The question which finally provoked the Government's fall (and which was quite certainly chosen by the President because of its purely internal nature) was that of State subsidy of education. The teaching body in the Lebanon (75 per cent. of whose schools are private) finally went on strike in February because of the Government's failure to keep repeated promises to improve conditions and wages. The Government was obliged to call an extraordinary session of the Chamber which, after three weeks of very slow progress, finally came to grips with this matter. A proposal was made to relieve the private schools of the extra burden of salaries and pensions. The Foreign Minister, backed by the Ministers of Justice, Education and Agriculture resigned, and M. Karamé in a dignified speech announced the resignation of the Government at the closing of the session on the 15th of March. Discussions on the formation of a new Cabinet are now being held.

9. M. Karamé was not basically a bad Prime Minister, despite his youth and his somewhat callow Left-wing ideas. He was, however, doomed from the start, having neither the President's confidence nor the support of the country. The President has been subject to criticism for keeping such an inefficient Government in office for so long; but on the other hand his position has undoubtedly strengthened during the six months of this Ministry. One of the reasons for this has been that people have increasingly looked to him for a lead as an alternative to the inadequacy of the Government. Another is undoubtedly that at a time when the split in the Arab world is becoming rapidly wider, the Christian

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No. 3

THE FALL OF RASHID KARAME'S GOVERNMENT

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received March 21)(No. 50. Confidential)
Sir,Beirut,
March 19, 1956

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population of the Lebanon feels increasingly nervous and looks more and more to the President for leadership and, as the leading member of the leading Christian community, for help in finding a means of ensuring the country's safety by closer contacts with the West.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Damascus, Amman, Tel Aviv, Cairo, Jedda, Ankara, Baghdad and to the Political Office, Middle East Forces, Nicosia.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT.

NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd (Received March 20)

(No. 251. Unclassified) (Telegraphic)

Beirut, March 20, 1956.

My telegram No. 236.

New Cabinet was formed yesterday evening, March 19, as follows:—

1. Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, Abdullah Yafi (Lebanese Personalities No. 130).
2. Minister of State, Saeb Salam (No. 104).
3. Health and Social Affairs, Nazih Bizri (Minister of Health and Economy in previous Cabinet).
4. Foreign Affairs and Justice, Salim Lahoud (No. 80. Foreign Minister in previous Cabinet).
5. Public Works and Planning, Emile Boustani (No. 23).
6. Finance, Georges Karam (No. 63).
7. Economy and Education, Georges Hakim (No. 51).
8. Agriculture, Joseph Skaff (no change).
9. Defence, Emir Majid Arslan (no change).
10. Information and P.T.T., Mohammed Sabra (Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan).

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No. 5

VISIT OF RUSSIAN ENGINEERING MISSION TO BEIRUT

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 9)(No. 59 E. S. Confidential)
Sir,Beirut,
April 4, 1956.

In my telegram No. 179 of the 28th of February and in paragraph 8 of my despatch No. 38 S. of the 6th of March, I commented on the presence in Beirut since the 22nd of February of a Russian mission of six engineers which had come ostensibly to study the means of assisting Lebanese industrial development.

2. The mission was led by M. Nicolai I. Melnikov of "Techno-export" and, according to Press reports, was composed of five members, MM. Vassili Soukhanov (petroleum engineer), Vladimir Milinki (construction and railway engineer), Evgueny Diuskin (mechanical engineer for light and medium industries), Vladimir Sorokin (chemical engineer) and Mlle. Galina Yashmolkina (interpreter in French and English).

3. The mission made no contact with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but had one formal meeting with the Minister of National Economy. The Director-General of the Ministry told the Commercial Secretary of this Embassy that at this meeting it was made clear to the Russians that the Lebanese Government had neither in hand nor in mind any projects in which Soviet assistance was or would be required. The Russians were, however, welcome to make any direct approaches they liked to Lebanese organisations and individuals.

4. After a short and apparently unfruitful contact with the Lebanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the mission concentrated their activities on the Association of Lebanese industrialists. From this Association they were assured of a friendly welcome in that the President, M. Philippe Tamer, is constantly looking for assistance in the industrialisation of Lebanon from any source and the Secretary, M. Abdullah Adra, is a known Communist.

5. The manner in which the mission presented themselves to the industrialists and to the general public was well organised. They offered to prospect for petrol and minerals, to provide technical assistance for such survey and to supply the most up-to-date machinery and advice of every description. In return, they asked for no part in profits or in shares. They would impose no conditions either political or economic. All that they sought was the mutual good of Russia and Lebanon. They would accept payment over a period of years at a low rate of interest (or without interest) or alternatively in the form of Lebanese goods.

6. When questioned by the Press shortly before the departure of the mission to Damascus on March 1, M. Melnikov declined to be precise as to the results of his contacts in Lebanon but he claimed to have had enquiries about hydro-electric and thermal power installations, a textile factory, a factory for chemicals and fertilisers, a factory for non-ferrous metals, a motor assembly plant, an agricultural machinery plant and a cement factory.

7. It has not been possible to establish the truth of any of these claims, but according to an investigation carried out by one of the more reliable and better informed Beirut newspapers, the Russians have undertaken to give further consideration to the following propositions said to have been put to them by Lebanese firms and individuals:—

- (a) Prospecting for iron ore and subsequent extraction.
- (b) Construction of a metallurgical factory.
- (c) Construction of a spinning and weaving factory.
- (d) Construction of an ink and printing materials factory.
- (e) Construction of a factory for the production of fruit juices and tinned tomatoes and fish.
- (f) Construction of a cement factory.

It is further understood that the owners of two Lebanese textile factories made enquiries about the possibility of modernising their existing machinery.

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8. It is too early to say how seriously the Russians will consider these and any other suggestions, which may have been made. Nor does it necessarily follow that, in the event of Russian interest being developed in any one or more projects, the Lebanese industrialists will go through with their ideas. On the whole the Lebanese tend to regard offers of Russian assistance and machinery with a certain amount of reserve partly for ideological reasons but more because they have little or no knowledge of the quality of Soviet production. Moreover, they are aware that there are dangers inherent in buying machinery against repayment in manufactured goods.

9. M. Melnikov seems to have realised the need to convince the Lebanese of Soviet capacity in that he issued an open invitation to Lebanese business men to come to Russia and see things for themselves. He is also quoted as having said that he believed Libano-Russian commercial relations would become effective when Russian firms were more widely represented in Lebanon. It is perhaps significant that shortly after this statement was made a Lebanese firm, Lebanon International Trading Corporation (L.I.T.Co.), which has been especially constituted to handle Lebanese-Russian trade and of which M. Abdullah Adra is the managing secretary and guiding spirit, took delivery of a consignment of some 900 tons of agricultural machinery, trucks, cars and electrical equipment including pumps. This consignment reached Beirut on the 10th of March on the *Proletarsky*, the first Russian merchant vessel to discharge goods specifically for Lebanon. From the same ship a consignment of about 1,600 tons of iron reinforcing rods was also unloaded. I understand that L.I.T.Co. intend to hold an exhibition of the Soviet equipment in the near future.

10. Such evidence as is available indicates that Russia intends to make a serious effort to enter the Lebanese commercial market. From 1951 to 1954 Russian exports to Lebanon were negligible. In 1951, they amounted, at the official rate of exchange, to £Leb.155,000, in 1952 to £Leb.84,000, in 1953 to £Leb.62,000 and in 1954 to £Leb.126,000. During the same period Lebanon exported nothing to Russia. In 1955 the picture changed completely. The value of Russia's exports to Lebanon rose to £Leb.1,664,000 and of Lebanon's exports to Russia to £Leb.3,101,000. Although details of the breakdown of these figures are not yet available they are in themselves significant, more particularly those relating to Lebanon's exports to Russia. Lebanon's visible balance of trade is always seriously in deficit and she has difficulty in finding markets for her exportable products, mainly agricultural produce and textiles. When therefore M. Melnikov said that Russia was prepared if necessary to absorb the whole of Lebanon's agricultural surplus (and could point to the fact that Russia imported 6,000 tons of Lebanese citrus fruit in 1955) and offered to accept payment in kind against the delivery of textile machinery he made an approach well calculated to arouse sympathetic Lebanese interest. By avoiding making offers of loans and by concentrating on the development of balanced trade the Russians adopted a wise attitude. In 1955 the value of Lebanon's imports was, at the official rate of exchange, some £Leb.529 million while that of her exports was approximately £Leb.121 million. No responsible person believes that it is possible wholly to close this gap. But it is the policy of the Government, by finding markets for Lebanon's products and by encouraging foreign assistance in the development of Lebanese industry, to do their best to narrow it. The field in which the Russians can manoeuvre is large and, although the Lebanese would probably, for many reasons, prefer to develop in association with Western Europe and the United States, there is a danger that if the help they require is not forthcoming from these sources they may find themselves obliged to accept it from Russia and her satellites.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Jedda, Moscow and Washington, to the Treasury, Commercial Relations and Exports Department at the Board of Trade, Export Credits Guarantee Department and to the Political Office Middle East Forces, Nicosia, and I am passing a copy to the Head of the Middle East Development Division here.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT.

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No. 6

INAUGURATION OF M. ABDULLAH YAFI'S CABINET

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 12)(No. 60. Confidential)
Sir,

Beirut,

April 5, 1956.

I have the honour to state (as briefly reported in my telegram No. 293 of the 30th of March (not addressed to all)) that the Cabinet of M. Abdullah Yafi presented its programme to the Chamber of Deputies on the 29th of March and, after a debate of nine hours, obtained a vote of confidence by 24 votes to 14 with 3 abstentions. This majority was unexpectedly small: it is the practice for most Lebanese Cabinets to get an almost unanimous vote of confidence on first taking office. The reason for the present result lies partly in the nature of the programme presented and partly in the composition of the Cabinet, of whose members I enclose a list.

2. So far as internal policy was concerned, the main points of the programme were:—

- (i) measures of reconstruction and assistance for the benefit of the victims of the earthquake of the 16th of March;
- (ii) official encouragement for the setting up of a Land Bank to aid reconstruction and lend money on easy terms to build houses for wage-earners;
- (iii) a special fund to be set aside for the construction of Government buildings to be financed from the sale of Government property;
- (iv) a settlement, within three months, of the oil transit agreement with the Iraq Petroleum Company. Either, it was stated, an agreement would be reached whereby profits would be shared on a "reasonable basis" or else the Lebanese Government would proceed to take certain legal measures against the company;
- (v) within three months legislation to be introduced for health insurance and within one month a proposal for reform of the judiciary, followed by reform of the administrative machinery;
- (vi) a Bill to raise the number of Deputies to 88, or double the present number.

3. So far as foreign policy was concerned, the main points of the programme were:—

- (i) no participation in any foreign pacts: in particular, Lebanon would not join the Bagdad Pact;
- (ii) better relations with Syria, particularly on the economic and military plane;
- (iii) an attempt would be made to apply the inter-Arab collective Security Pact and to co-ordinate Arab policy towards Israel.
- (iv) so far as the Johnston Plan was concerned, reference was made to an earlier decision of the Chamber of Deputies rejecting the Plan in its present form; action with the other interested Arab countries would be co-ordinated with the object of producing a purely Arab scheme which would have no connection with Israel.

4. In the absence of any party system in the Lebanon the contributors to the debate put forward mainly their own personal views coloured, in many instances, by the fact that neither they nor their friends had been invited to join the Cabinet. Though M. Ghassan Tuani (Personality No. 128) was certainly annoyed by his exclusion from the Cabinet, his interventions had substance and point. He alone reflected that not inconsiderable section of Lebanese opinion which favours co-operation with the West. He spoke with emphasis, too, against the Communists. His persistence compelled the Prime Minister to say that he was as much opposed

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to the Saudi-Egyptian axis as to the Bagdad Pact. And M. Tuani forced the only other ministerial intervention which had more than a passing interest. This was the reply by M. Selim Lahoud, Minister for Foreign Affairs, to a request for clarification on Lebanon's policy towards the Tripartite Declaration. M. Lahoud said that the Lebanese Government did not recognise this Declaration: it had not asked for it, nor did it intend to make use of it, nor to refer to it. I shall take an early opportunity to discuss this statement with M. Lahoud because there have been instances in the past when Lebanese Ministers for Foreign Affairs, and indeed the President himself, have raised with us the implications of the Tripartite Declaration.

5. The new Cabinet is individually stronger than its predecessor. M. Saeb Salam, Minister of State, is able and was himself a strong candidate for the Premiership. M. Emile Bustani, Minister for Public Works, is a leading figure although his interventions in foreign affairs are somewhat erratic. M. Mohammed Sabra, Minister of Information and formerly Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan, is intelligent and well equipped to understand what is going on in the Arab world. The Cabinet is likely to suffer in some respects from this *embarras de richesses*: the presence of such persons, however, may result in something more being achieved on the domestic front than the usual futile sequence of inaction following similar pious declarations of intent by incoming Cabinets.

6. In foreign policy the Government's programme has had a good reception only from the Left-wing press and those Arab nationalists who support (for whatever reason) the Saudi-Egyptian axis. The Egyptian Ambassador, indeed, has publicly expressed his approval of the new Cabinet and its policy. The Communists, although their party is banned, issued a leaflet in support of the new Government without even waiting for the debate in the Chamber. The debate itself was not very enlightening, for the answers given to various questions only showed that the Prime Minister and M. Selim Lahoud were trying to please everyone.

7. M. Yafi's personal inclinations in foreign policy are towards support of Egypt; but he is much less prejudiced and narrow-minded than his predecessor and certainly not almost a fellow-traveller as M. Karamé was. The President is likely to have a difficult time with him, however, in preserving cordial relations between Lebanon and Iraq because such a policy conflicts with the bias of the Cabinet as a whole in favour of the Egyptian-Saudi axis.

8. A remarkable feature of the Cabinet is that four of its members come from outside the Chamber of Deputies. There had been for some time talk of the need for a united national Government to face the possibly critical months ahead. M. Yafi was unable to find within the Chamber—although more because of personal reasons than anything else—a grouping of leaders who would command widespread support and therefore had to resort to the expedient of taking some of his Ministers from outside. There still is no Greek Orthodox Minister although, according to the political convention of the Lebanon, there must be one in the Cabinet. The post has been offered to M. Georges Hakim, Lebanese Minister in Bonn, but he has not yet accepted it. He is believed to foresee a fairly short life for this Cabinet and does not wish to risk his future career. The President also told me that he did not expect the Cabinet to last very long: it contains too many strong individualist members. I discount to some extent this gloomy prophecy on the grounds of the President's exasperation at the confused and inefficient handling of earthquake relief organisation.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch and its enclosure to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bahrain, Bagdad, Cairo, Damascus, Jedda, Tel Aviv and Washington, and to the Head of the Political Office with the Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT.

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Enclosure

Members of the Cabinet

1. Prime Minister and Minister of Interior:
Abdullah Yafi (Lebanese Personalities No. 130). Sunni Muslim—lawyer.
2. Minister of State (with special responsibilities for oil questions and Arab affairs):
Saeb Salam (No. 104). Sunni Muslim—business man.
3. Health and Social Affairs:
Nazih Bizri (see despatch No. 142 of the 20th of September, 1955). Sunni Muslim—doctor.
4. Foreign Affairs and Justice:
Selim Lahoud (No. 80). Maronite Christian—engineer.
5. Public Works and Planning:
Emile Bustani (No. 23). Maronite Christian—business man.
6. Finance:
Georges Karam (No. 63.) Maronite Christian—business man.
7. Economy and Education—doubt as to whether this is filled, but will presumably go to a Greek Orthodox candidate.
8. Agriculture:
Joseph Skaff (see despatch No. 142 of the 20th of September, 1955). Greek Catholic—landowner.
9. Defence:
Emir Majid Arslan (No. 13). Druse—landowner.
10. Information and P.T.T.:
Mohammed Sabra. Shia Muslim—career diplomat. Has been Consul General in Dakar, Minister in Tehran, and Ambassador in Amman. Well educated; speaks both French and English; intelligent. Not unfriendly, but could not be described as pro-British.

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No. 7

BUDGET FOR 1956

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 18)

(No. 66 E. Confidential)

Beirut,

Sir,

April 14, 1956.

I have the honour to report the promulgation on the 29th of February of the Lebanese Budget Law for 1956, dated the 25th of February, in which revenue and expenditure are estimated to balance at £Leb.151,500,000. I enclose two Appendices showing the sources from which revenue is expected to be derived and the Departments of Government through which it is proposed to be spent. The Appendices include the corresponding 1955 figures for purposes of comparison.

2. As was the case in 1954 and 1955, the 1956 Budget is some 10 per cent. bigger than its immediate predecessor. In 1953 the estimated revenue and expenditure was balanced (to the nearest £Leb. million) at £Leb.112 million, in 1954 at £Leb.124 million and in 1955 at £Leb.137 million.

3. On the revenue side the largest increase is, for once, in direct taxation where the estimates of incomings are at £Leb.42 million, some 23 per cent. higher than the 1955 figure of £Leb.34 million. This is not the result of the imposition of new taxes or of the increase of existing ones but is probably due to continued reorganisation of the taxation services, leading to improvements in the assessment and collection of taxes. In comparison with direct taxation the estimated revenue from indirect taxation (mainly from customs duties and taxes on fuel and tobacco) has risen but slightly—the 1956 figure of £Leb.87 million is approximately 6 per cent. higher than the 1955 figure of £Leb.82 million. Nevertheless indirect taxation is still expected to provide the greater part of Lebanon's revenue, 58 per cent. in 1956 as against 60 per cent. in 1955.

4. On the expenditure side the biggest decrease is in the provision for outstanding debts. The figure of £Leb.11 million under this head is, however, almost exactly that of the average provision made in the three budgets for 1953, 1954 and 1955. Decreases have also been made in the provisions for the Presidency of the Republic, and for the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Public Health and National Economy but these are not large enough to call for individual comment. The biggest percentage reduction has been in the allocation to the Ministry of Information which has been reduced by 30 per cent. from the 1955 figure of £Leb.1.3 million to £Leb.0.9 million.

5. Increased provision has been made for expenditure by all the rest of the Government Departments. With two exceptions, those of the Ministry of Defence and of Public Works, these increases are approximately the same as, or less than, the amount by which the 1956 Budget is larger than that of 1955, *i.e.*, 10 per cent. The Ministry of Defence is allotted £Leb.30 million, a 25 per cent. increase over the 1955 figure of £Leb.24 million. The Ministry of Public Works with £Leb.27.4 million is expected to spend 21 per cent. more than it was allotted in 1955 when the provision was £Leb.22.6 million.

6. It is estimated that of the total revenue £Leb.76.7 million (50.6 per cent.) will be spent on wages and salaries, £Leb.35.0 million (23.1 per cent.) on development works, £Leb.18.4 million (12.1 per cent.) on general and administrative matters, £Leb.10.8 million (7.2 per cent.) on Government debts and pensions, £Leb.9.2 million (6.1 per cent.) on social and cultural subventions and £Leb.0.8 million (0.5 per cent.) on exploitation costs, while £Leb.0.6 million (0.4 per cent.) are being kept in reserve for unforeseen contingencies.

7. In the two reports which he submitted to the Lebanese Minister of Finance in November 1954 and January 1955, Mr. E. A. Shillito of Her Majesty's Treasury made the point that "a system that regularly results in actual receipts of revenue exceeding the estimates by more than (say) 5 per cent. to 10 per cent. must be

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somewhat suspect". The following table shows the extent of underestimation of revenue by the Lebanese Government during the last three years for which the accounts have been finally closed:—

(In £Leb. million)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Year	Estimated revenue and expenditure	Actual revenue	Difference between actual and estimated revenue	4 expressed in terms of 3	Actual expenditure
1952	94.3	124.9	30.6	Per cent. 24.5	88.5
1953	112.6	141.2	28.4	20.1	96.3
1954	123.4	157.4	34.0	21.6	111.2

8. Mr. Shillito made the suggestion that "it may be desirable to depart from the convention usually observed in the Lebanese Budget, whereby expenditure and revenue are always brought into balance". From the fact that the 1956 Budget has been presented in its conventional balanced form it may be concluded that the Minister of Finance has adhered to the view that a very conservative estimation of revenue shelters the equilibrium of the Budget from the effects of possible economic disturbances and serves to hold in check excessive demands for expenditure despite the fact that the knowledge of the likelihood of a large surplus will make it difficult for him to resist demands for additional appropriations during the course of the Budget year.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Treasury, to Commercial Relations and Exports Department of the Board of Trade and to Export Credits Guarantee Department, and I am passing a copy to the Head of Middle East Development Division here.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT.

APPENDIX A

ESTIMATED REVENUE IN LEBANESE POUNDS

	1956	1955
Direct Taxes and Duties	42,370,000	33,989,000
Indirect Taxes and Duties	87,440,000	82,350,000
Receipts from State Properties and Exploitation Services	5,635,000	5,428,000
Miscellaneous Revenue	16,055,000	15,733,000
Total	151,500,000	137,500,000

APPENDIX B

ESTIMATED EXPENDITURE IN LEBANESE POUNDS

	1956	1955
Presidency of the Republic	405,380	472,100
Chamber of Deputies	921,380	897,100
Presidency of the Council of Ministers	429,720	380,300
Ministry of Justice	4,671,560	4,351,100
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants	5,596,107	5,874,000
Ministry of Interior	17,475,064	16,360,440
Ministry of Finance	10,892,243	10,053,627
Ministry of National Defence	30,003,200	23,930,100
Ministry of Education and Fine Arts	19,289,922	17,382,407
Ministry of Public Health	6,696,635	6,767,795
Ministry of Social Affairs	2,529,657	1,957,225
Ministry of Information	924,490	1,295,000
Ministry of Public Works	27,393,425	22,599,660
Ministry of Agriculture	6,171,237	6,092,471
Ministry of National Economy	2,245,484	2,358,500
Ministry of Posts, Telegraphs and Telephones	3,958,913	3,717,805
Ministry of Planning	429,740	371,920
Outstanding Debts Due for Payment	10,834,500	12,149,400
Contingency Fund Provision	631,343	489,050
Total	151,500,000	137,500,000

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No. 8

NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received June 9)(No. 477. Unclassified)
(Telegraphic)*Beirut,
June 9, 1956.*

My telegram No. 467.

New Cabinet was formed last night as follows:

Prime Minister, Interior and Planning, Abdullah Yafi.
 Foreign Affairs, Selim Lahoud.
 Minister of State, Saeb Salam.
 Finance and Economy, Georges Karam.
 Defence, Emir Majid Arslan.
 Agriculture, Joseph Skaff.
 Health and Social Affairs, Nazih Bizri.
 Public Works and Information, Mohammed Sabra.
 Justice, Alfred Naccache.
 Education and PTT, Fouad Ghosn.

2. Naccache was Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1954-55. Ghosn was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice in the Kerame Ministry of 1955-56.

3. The Cabinet will present its policy declaration to the Chamber of Deputies next week.

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No. 9

CABINET CRISIS IN THE LEBANON

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received June 20)(No. 99. Restricted)
Sir,*Beirut,
June 16, 1956.*

With reference to my telegram No. 477 of the 9th of June reporting the formation of the new Lebanese Cabinet; I have the honour to state that the Cabinet received the vote of confidence of the Lebanese Chamber on the 14th of June by 30 votes to 5, with 3 abstentions.

2. The Cabinet crisis arose over the disagreement between the Minister for Public Works, M. Emile Boustani, and his colleagues over the policy to be followed in reconstructing the areas devastated by the recent earthquake and the methods to be adopted for administering relief. It was immediately precipitated by the resignation on the 5th of June of the Minister for Foreign Affairs (M. Selim Lahoud) and the Minister of Defence (Emir Majid Arslan), the former backed by the Democratic and Independent blocs in the Chamber.

3. The dispute over reconstruction was whether, as Boustani had insisted, the reconstruction of the 4,000 destroyed and 12,000 damaged houses following the earthquake of March should be planned, executed and controlled by the newly-established Office of Reconstruction; or whether those who had lost their houses should be left to rebuild them themselves with the help of funds provided by the State. M. Boustani's opponents claimed that bureaucratic centralisation of all this work would result in delay and suffering. The Minister retorted that it would be done more efficiently, economically and honestly and that, in any case, the total work would so strain the resources of the country in terms of skilled manpower, &c., that only central control could deal with the problem.

4. In fact, however, there was a great deal of personal animosity behind this attack on M. Boustani. He is a much more vigorous Minister of Works than the country has had for a long time, but he is forceful to the point of often lacking sadly in tact. His policy of nationalising the Port Company has made him many enemies; and so has his refusal to allow the officials of his Ministry to be approached direct by Deputies and other influential people. There was strong opposition, which he however successfully overcame, to his being appointed Head of the independent Reconstruction Office in the first place.

5. The Prime Minister, M. Yafi, appears to have been only too glad to take the opportunity of the resignations of two Ministers to rid himself of this boisterous colleague; and even the President of the Republic, despite his friendship for M. Boustani, seems to have felt some relief. M. Boustani's reactions, however, were so violent that both had in the end to placate him. Although he went to the very verge of constitutional propriety in his public attacks on his enemies he dealt them some very shrewd blows. His enemies were successful in expelling him from the Ministry but not in taking from him his post at the head of the Office of Reconstruction which he continues to hold on terms which barely wear the appearance of a compromise.

6. The new Ministry which was formed on the 8th of June has changed little. M. Georges Hakim, who had accepted the Portfolio of National Economy with reluctance, has gone back to his post as Minister in Bonn; and M. Boustani has handed over Public Works to M. Mohammed Sabra. The Foreign Minister, M. Selim Lahoud, has thankfully passed on the thorny problems of education to the newcomer M. Fuad Ghosn, who was Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice in the Kerame Ministry of 1955-56; and the weak but distinguished ex-President and ex-Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Alfred Naccache, has entered the Cabinet as Minister of Justice. The Government's declaration of policy was confined to confirming that of the previous Yafi Cabinet (on which Mr. Scott reported in his despatch No. 60 of 5th of April) and adding a statement on its earthquake reconstruction policy which is essentially that of M. Emile Boustani. The very large majority by which the vote of confidence was passed after all the mud-slinging of the past weeks is undoubtedly due to the personal influence exerted by the President of the Republic.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Damascus, Amman, Cairo and to the Political Office, Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

G. H. MIDDLETON.

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VL 10338/11

No. 10

11 2101 JV

M. SHEPILOV'S VISIT TO LEBANON

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received July 7)

(No. 108 S. Confidential)

Beirut,

Sir,

July 2, 1956.

I have the honour to report that M. Shepilov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, left Beirut on the morning of the 28th of June after a visit of a little over two days.

2. He arrived here in his own plane on the evening of the 25th of June accompanied by his daughter Victoria and an entourage of about 10. He was welcomed with military honours by the Minister for Foreign Affairs at the airport. The airport balconies were fairly well occupied but the crowd included the Communist Chinese Cultural Delegation now in Lebanon and seemingly the whole of the Russian and Czech Legation staffs; the reception by the public was markedly thin. The route from the airport was lined with gendarmes but there was no cause for them to act. The Press, to their great indignation, were not admitted on to the tarmac or into the *Salon d'Honneur*. The Russians did, however, hand out on M. Shepilov's arrival the text of a declaration by him addressed to the Lebanese people (the text of which is enclosed).

3. The two-day programme from the 26th to the 27th of June began with the laying of a wreath at the *Monument aux Morts* and included dinners given by President Chamoun and the Russian Minister to the Lebanon, a luncheon by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, a visit to a refugee camp, a morning's sight-seeing, and talks with the President, Speaker, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs. M. Shepilov's public manner was genial and his daughter gave the Press a chance to introduce a more human touch. There was keen interest but no great excitement or any large demonstration, though this may have been partly due to the Government's expressed intention to prevent such manifestations. It is certainly true that the Communist Party and fellow travellers were noticeable by their absence and silence.

4. In a speech of welcome at the dinner which he gave for the visitors, President Chamoun struck a dignified note. His speech was published widely and I attach the text. In particular, he said the Lebanon was "a country of tolerance and liberty . . . attached to moral ideals rather than material things, and believing firmly in the free self-determination of peoples . . .". He said specifically and pointedly that this was the substance of what he had told M. Shepilov in their private discussions. When I saw the President on the 29th of June, I congratulated him on this speech, to his obvious pleasure. He told me that the Russians had an unfortunate tendency to refer the whole time to "the Arab peoples" and "the Arab masses" and that he had had to pull them up sharply, telling them that in the Lebanon at least it was inappropriate to use such language and that it was the Government and Parliament who governed the country.

5. As I reported in my telegram No. 515, President Chamoun had instructed his Government to listen to what M. Shepilov had to say but to enter into no discussions of substance and make no commitments. This policy was supported (in a way that the President's instructions are not always carried out) by the Lebanese Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs. At the time when the visit was first announced, the Minister for Foreign Affairs spontaneously denied Press reports that my United States colleague and I had protested to him against M. Shepilov's being invited.

6. On the one occasion on which M. Shepilov is reported to have met, briefly, members of the Parliamentary Committee, he is said to have had to fence rather cleverly to avoid some awkward questions. The circumstances of the publication of the final joint communiqué (of which the English translation is attached) also suggest that M. Lahoud, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, carried out his instructions well. The issue of the communiqué was delayed for 24 hours and it only finally appeared late on the evening of the day M. Shepilov left. The wording is vague. Although it states that the viewpoints of the two sides were in agreement on the subjects discussed, those subjects are defined only as "certain international questions of common interest . . . including the problems of the Arab world".

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There is no direct mention of Palestine or Algeria. In a Press conference just after M. Shepilov's departure, M. Lahoud is reported to have said that there were points still to be cleared up (he mentioned particularly Algeria), and that he "was happy but wished he could have been happier". This, read with the vagueness of the statement, has given the general impression that the Russians have temporised on precisely the questions which interest the Lebanon (even the mention of the strengthening of economic co-operation was defined by the Minister in his Press conference as meaning only the expansion of trade through normal channels).

7. It was the Palestine and Algeria questions above all which were the touchstone of Lebanese views on M. Shepilov's visit. When the visit to Egypt produced nothing definite on these two basic issues, even the Left-wing Press and those nationalist papers which follow the Saudi-Egyptian line, while formally welcoming the visitor, were increasingly suspicious of his attitude towards them. Papers began to talk of his "evasiveness", to remember that Russia had subscribed to the setting up of Israel and were exporting oil to her; and that the Russian leaders had in April agreed with Sir Anthony Eden on the need for a "settlement of the Palestine question on a mutually satisfactory basis". The President and Dr. Fouad Ammoun, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told me that in the course of the conversations (in which the Russians did most of the talking—"55 minutes in every hour" according to the President) the Russians emphasised their devotion to the principles of the United Nations and their desire to be on good terms with all and sundry, and denied that they had any intention of trying to drive a wedge between the Arab countries and their Western friends.

8. M. Shepilov was pressed very hard about the Russian attitude to Palestine. In reply he pointed out that although the Soviet Union had recognised Israel, his Government had not subscribed to the 1947 and 1948 United Nations resolutions. He went on to say that the oft quoted passage from the recent Anglo-Soviet joint communiqué misrepresented the Russian view, which was general support for the Arab nations and firm adherence to United Nations resolutions. M. Shepilov cleverly avoided any precise commitments but succeeded in giving the general impression that the Soviet Union was favourable to the Arab cause and in particular took all the credit for the amendment of the recent British-sponsored resolution by the Security Council. The Lebanese were not particularly impressed by all this but both the President and Dr. Ammoun thought that Egypt and Syria (whom the President described as "*les uns des fanatiques, les autres des fous*") would have been impressed by M. Shepilov's honeyed words.

9. On Algeria, M. Shepilov succeeded in giving the general impression that the Soviet Union was favourable to the Arab point of view. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs at the same time made it clear that Russia supported Nehru's five-point plan and thought that this approach was the best one to follow for the time being. It was for that reason that Russia had proposed an adjournment of the question at the Security Council.

10. M. Shepilov said that his country was willing to extend economic aid without conditions to all under-developed countries. As regards the Lebanon, he said that they could provide machinery and factory equipment to help the industrialisation of the country, train Lebanese technicians, provide Russian technicians to help in starting new industries in the Lebanon, &c., &c. (the President said he was quite overwhelmed by the torrent of offers). When they came down to brass tacks the Russians proposed that the exchange of goods to an annual value of £Leb.4 million should be quadrupled with immediate effect. The Russians also said that they would be prepared to examine, on an individual basis, industrial or other development projects requiring foreign aid, with a view to helping over finance. They indicated that their terms would be generous—long-term loans at 2½ per cent. interest. At no time did the Russians offer outright grants.

11. Finally the President told me that M. Shepilov had offered to supply arms to the Lebanon. To this the President had replied that at the moment Lebanon's modest needs were being fully met.

12. In general, both the President and Dr. Fouad Ammoun thought that the visit had gone off well and that each side had at the end of it a better understanding of the other. There was a good deal of wariness and neither party gave much away. At the same time, the Russians probably scored a certain propaganda success in public estimation and it remained to be seen how vigorously they would follow up these preliminary contacts.

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13. The more thoughtful Arab nationalist papers, the French-language Press, and other more responsible journals have been encouragingly full of doubts ever since M. Shepilov came to the Middle East. While he was in Egypt these papers were both suspicious and nervous of Russian intentions in the Middle East, and this feeling extended to some criticism of Egypt for trying to drag the other Arab countries at her coat-tails on a perilous path. The usual attacks on the West, blaming us for losing the friendship of the Arabs for the sake of Israel, contained a new note. We were now invited to "wake up" not merely for our own sake but also in order to help the Arabs to avoid the embraces of Russia. Papers which usually take an anti-Communist line (and some others) spoke much of the Lebanon's tradition of personal freedom and the ideological incompatibility of the Lebanese and Soviet systems. The manifold speculations about the possibility of loans, gifts of arms, &c., have been disappointing so far and the disappointment has added to the general scepticism.

14. In my judgment, M. Shepilov has failed to appreciate the difference between the nationalism of semi-Christian Lebanon with its strong Western connexions, and the nationalism of its Moslem neighbours. His message to the Lebanese people for their services to peace and in the struggle of Arab East against the aggressive Baghdad Pact, which aimed at a new slavery and a new colonisation. This aroused resentment in some papers (and indeed three Arabic-language papers promptly published an article on the Pact supplied by my Information Office). This is not to say that there was an appreciable reaction in favour of the Baghdad Pact: it does illustrate, however, M. Shepilov's faulty judgment. The Lebanese policy has not been to attack the Pact, but to avoid involvement with either side of the struggle and to keep the friendship of both parties. The implication that the Lebanon is just another Arab country has reminded a great many people (notably of course the Christians) that it is basically nothing of the sort. At the final dinner given by the Russian Minister, M. Kiktev, the Speaker of the Chamber, who is an ardent Arab nationalist and himself a Shiah Moslem, referred in a speech to "the dream of the Lebanon and the Arab States of total Arab unity and the creation of one Arab nation". M. Henri Pharaon, Christian and ex-Foreign Minister, felt constrained to remind M. Osseiran and the assembled company of the inter-communal Pact of 1943 and to insist that the Speaker had no right to imperil in this way the Lebanon's sovereignty, independence and internal unity. I understand that the scene became a heated and almost unseemly one.

15. I should like to end on the note of *L'Orient* which, commenting on Mr. Dulles' remarks about the lack of success of M. Shepilov's visit, advised him not to dismiss it as a total failure. I believe the chief significance of this visit is that the new Russian Foreign Minister has now had an opportunity to make his own appreciation of the situation in the Middle East. The forthcoming visit of President Chamoun to Russia sets the seal of official approval on all the visits which people have hitherto made with a sense of daring and to some extent disrepute. From now on, Russia is firmly established in the Middle East and she will almost certainly learn quickly how to profit by being here.

16. I am sending copies of this despatch and its enclosures to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Baghdad, Cairo, Damascus, Jedda, Moscow, Paris and Washington, the Head of the United Kingdom Delegation, New York, and the Head of the Political Office with the Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

G. H. MIDDLETON.

Enclosure I

DECLARATION

Voici le texte de la déclaration:—

" Messieurs,

A l'heure où j'arrive sur la terre du Liban ami, il m'est agréable de vous présenter au nom du peuple et du Gouvernement soviétiques de chaleureuses salutations et des vœux sincères pour le Gouvernement de la République libanaise et le peuple libanais tout entier.

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Une franche amitié s'était établie depuis longtemps entre nos deux pays et le peuple russe considérait toujours avec bienveillance et une complète compréhension la lutte du peuple libanais pour la liberté et l'indépendance. L'Union Soviétique apprécie beaucoup les services du peuple libanais en faveur de la paix et de la lutte de l'Orient arabe contre le Pacte agressif de Baghdad qui vise à un nouvel esclavage et à une nouvelle colonisation.

Nous attachons une grande importance au développement de relations cordiales avec le Liban et il nous est agréable de pouvoir établir des contacts personnels avec ses dirigeants.

Je suis certain que l'établissement de pareils rapports, de même que l'élargissement et le développement des rapports économiques et culturels entre nos deux pays, sont susceptibles de contribuer au renforcement de l'amitié russo-libanaise ainsi qu'au raffermissement de la paix mondiale et de la collaboration entre les nations."

Enclosure II

TEXT OF PRESIDENT CHAMOUN'S SPEECH

Monsieur le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères de l'Union Soviétique,

Vous nous avez apporté, en arrivant à Beyrouth, le salut fraternel de Son Excellence le Président Vorochilov et des peuples de l'Union Soviétique.

Vous nous avez aussi apporté l'amitié constructive de votre gouvernement.

Je vous en remercie profondément et vous prie d'exprimer aux peuples de l'Union Soviétique, et à Son Excellence le Président Vorochilov, mes vœux sincères aussi que ceux du peuple libanais.

Je voudrais aussi que, de votre séjour parmi nous, vous gardiez le souvenir du véritable visage du Liban comme d'un pays essentiellement fait d'hospitalité, de tolérance et de liberté, d'un pays qui rend le bien pour le bien et l'amitié pour l'amitié, d'un pays attaché au côté moral de la vie plutôt qu'à ses aspects matériels, et qui croit fermement que la libre détermination des peuples, la justice internationale et la coopération paisible entre les nations, sont non seulement la sauvegarde des petits pays mais celle de l'humanité entière pour prévenir toute guerre future avec ses horreurs et ses misères.

Je crois que ceci résume un peu notre conversation de ce matin, et c'est dans ce sentiment que je vous souhaite, encore une fois, la bienvenue au Liban et que je lève mon verre à la santé de Son Excellence le Président Vorochilov, au bonheur et à la prospérité des peuples de l'Union Soviétique.

Enclosure III

LEBANESE-SOVIET JOINT COMMUNIQUE

Between June 25 and 28, Soviet Foreign Minister Dimitri Shepilov visited Lebanon at the invitation of the Government of the Lebanese Republic.

Mr. Shepilov was received by President Camille Chamoun with whom he had friendly talks.

Other talks also took place in Beirut during Mr. Shepilov's visit. The Lebanese conferees were Prime Minister Abdullah Yafi, Foreign Minister Salim Lahoud, and Fuad Ammoun, Secretary-General of the Lebanese Foreign Ministry. The Soviet delegation to the talks included Mr. Dimitri Shepilov, Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr. Sergei Kitev, Soviet Minister to Lebanon, and Mr. Zitsif, Head of the Middle and Near East Department at the Soviet Foreign Ministry.

The talks were conducted in a friendly atmosphere. The conferees exchanged wide and clear viewpoints over Lebanese-Soviet relations and certain international questions of common interest to Lebanon and the Soviet Union, including the problems of the Arab World.

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Representatives of both sides noted that their viewpoints were in agreement on the subjects discussed, and reaffirmed the traditional friendly relations existing between Lebanon and the Soviet Union. They also agreed that the forthcoming development of their friendship tallies with the interests of their peoples and will practically serve in strengthening peace.

In order to strengthen friendly relations between Lebanon and the Soviet Union, the conferees agreed to raise the Lebanese Legation in the Soviet Union and the Soviet Legation in Beirut to ambassadorial level.

Representatives of both sides expressed eagerness to strengthen economic and cultural co-operation between their two countries. They once more stressed that friendly relations between the Republic of Lebanon and the Soviet Union are based on the principles of the United Nations Charter and the principles of the Bandung Conferences which inspire the two Governments. They declared that they were determined to continue serving peace, because they are persuaded that their efforts and those of the other States who love peace will participate in alleviating international tension and in strengthening world peace.

President Camille Chamoun received an invitation, through Mr. Shepilov, from Mr. Voroshilov, President of the Soviet Union, to visit the Soviet Union whenever he finds it suitable to do so as guest of the Soviet Presidency.

President Chamoun accepted the invitation and thanked Mr. Voroshilov and the Soviet Union.

COMMUNIST INFLUENCE IN THE LEBANON

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received October 29)

(No. 173 "S." Confidential) Beirut, October 25, 1956.

I have the honour to report on the growth of the influence of Communism and Communists in Lebanon since Mr. Scott's despatch No. 38 of the 6th of March, 1956. In brief, indigenous Lebanese Communism has remained weak and has neither been able, nor indeed has needed, to do more than encourage from behind the scenes the forces of nationalism and inter-Arab rivalry which have been playing the Russian game for them. Russia herself, however, and the other Communist countries, have become respectable to know, and even democratic and Western-looking Lebanon has been curious to discover what the new neighbours are like. The neighbours have been taking full advantage of this curiosity.

2. The Communist Party in the Lebanon remains small in numbers, ill-organised and demoralised by the pretensions of its favoured big brother of Syria. It remains proscribed and has a watchful eye kept on it by the Lebanese Security Authorities, who have on at least three occasions this year confiscated stocks of Communist propaganda. They have also prosecuted nine "Partisans of Peace." The party's instructions appear to be to keep in the background and to operate through Front organisations while encouraging every tendency towards subversion of the Western position. Some account of their efforts is given later.

3. The Russian Government, however, has been paying growing attention to the Lebanon on the official plane. Russian (and other Communist) diplomats here have increased their numbers and activities. On the occasion of the main manifestation of the Russian presence here, when the Russian Foreign Minister, M. Shepilov, paid a three-day official visit in June, he came in the role of a representative of a great and friendly Power, with the intention of exploring the ground, testing reactions and offering golden prospects in the shape of loans, other economic assistance and arms. The local Communists were instructed by the party to remain as unobtrusive as possible. M. Shepilov's gifts were feared—though not by everyone; his political pronouncements

were vague, but skilfully so. But the President of Lebanon agreed in principle to a return invitation to Russia, and for the Lebanese the acceptance of a free trip to Moscow, once daring and dangerous, is now respectable. And there have been many offers.

4. The Russians themselves are stronger on the ground. M. Kiktev, since M. Shepilov's visit, is now an Ambassador, and a very active one. His already somewhat superfluous Assistant Military Attaché, directed from Damascus, has been raised to the rank of Military Attaché, and certain of his staff are socially active to the point of being utter pests. Until this year, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia were the only other Communist countries which had diplomatic representation here. Now, the Polish Minister—a "London Pole"—has, after a long battle, yielded place to a nominee of Warsaw. China, East Germany and Roumania have commercial missions here. There have been reports of Russian pressure on the Lebanese Government for permission to open a consulate in the politically vulnerable area of North Lebanon.

5. The Russians have begun to take the lead over the Western Powers in propaganda activity. They now head both the United States Embassy and ourselves as the customers of the Lebanese Postal Services. Particular attention has been paid to publicising the Russian and Satellite culture and "Way of Life." A "Vice-President for Cultural Affairs" of the Russian Government has visited the Lebanon to proliferate promises of cultural co-operation (scholarships, chairs of Russian at Lebanese universities, &c.) and to press for a cultural agreement. The Assistant Director of "Intourist" has visited here and appointed an agent in Beirut. The excellent "Beryoska Ballet" from Moscow came here in April and another, less ambitious, troupe in October. In August, Russian pressure succeeded in lifting the ban on the "Society for Cultural Relations between Lebanon and Russia." In September a party of so-called representatives of Lebanese *intelligentsia* was taken to Moscow,

Leningrad and Central Asia and came back full of public praises of the civilisation and standard of living of the Russian people. A visit of Lebanese Parliamentarians to Russia was only postponed because of Parliamentary exigencies.

6. It is notable how quickly the other Communist countries have joined in. China has sent us a so-called "Peking Opera," a Youth Delegation and a party of Chinese Muslim pilgrims from this year's *Hajj*. Hungary has presented a ballet troupe; East Germany a group of musicians (who were, however, a failure); and Czechoslovakia a very good string quartet and a very learned professor of oriental music. With the exception of the Germans and Czechs, these visitors have laid stress on the universal (if superficial) appeal of folk music and dancing, and on bonds of religion and race, rather than on their distinctive contributions to the sum of human civilisation. This steady permeation of Communist cultural propaganda is likely to take a long time to have any effect on the more sophisticated of the middle and upper classes of the Lebanon, and indeed much of it rebounds against the Communists in those quarters. The mass of the Lebanese cannot fail, however, to be increasingly impressed.

7. A more direct influence is exerted by the subversive efforts of Lebanese Communists and fellow-travellers to damage Western interests here. The Communists' policies continue to be served almost perfectly by the anti-Western trends of Arab nationalism. The Communists have found useful scope for supporting these aims by working with a number of bodies:—

(a) *The Congress of Parties and Organisations*.—This loose confederation of Arab nationalists, Muslim fanatics, woolly social idealists and paid lackeys of Egypt and, until recently, Saudi Arabia has taken a leading part in a number of anti-Western demonstrations (notably the general strike of the 16th of August in favour of President Nasser). It is permeated by Communist influence.

(b) *Trade Unions*.—The Communists have supported the Arab nationalist Arab Confederation of Labour Unions (A.C.L.U.) and have had some success in North Lebanon. Their attention to this area and their success there is disquieting in view of the presence in Tripoli of the Iraq

Petroleum Company oil installations and a predominantly Muslim community. The demonstrations of the 8th of May in favour of the Algerian Arabs were particularly successful in Tripoli, where these were backed by the Communist-infiltrated "North Lebanese Federation of Unions." It is also disquieting that the A.C.L.U. were able to get promises of support from the Lebanese Minister of State, Saeb Salam. He is no Communist but is unscrupulous and has tied his fortunes for the time being to the dispute between Lebanese and the I.P.C. on oil transit dues.

(c) *Popular Oil Committees*.—These are a new development drawing their main vigour from the I.P.C. dispute. They have been formed in many towns of the Lebanon and have been able to enlist the support of a wide range of people who have no Communist sympathies—including, for example, the president of the Bar Association. The co-ordinating committee is, however, composed predominantly of fellow-travellers.

(d) *The Armenian Community*.—The failure of Catholicos Vasken to prevent the election of the Tashnak (Right wing) nominee as Catholicos of Cilicia has not quelled the discontent of many moderate Armenians, and this continues to be fomented by the Communist elements. There was a further outbreak of protest at Bikfaya in October which required the presence of large forces of gendarmerie, though no violence resulted. A large meeting of Armenians on the 19th of August in Beirut, held in support of Egypt, was mainly organised by Armenian Communists though it attracted much non-Communist support. The Bagramian Sports Club (and in Lebanon popular sport is almost an Armenian preserve) is a main centre of Communist influence and extends its activities as far as para-military training.

(e) *The Greek Orthodox Church*.—The attention paid by the Russians to this community has been further underlined by visits of the Metropolitan Bishops of Tyre and Sidon and of Mount Lebanon to Moscow, followed by a whole delegation of

Greek Orthodox priests later in the year. The Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Zahleh has also visited China.

8. In addition to the trade agreements with Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, East Germany, Russia, China, Poland and Roumania which already existed at the time of Mr. Scott's despatch of the 6th of March, a new agreement with Bulgaria has been signed and the Lebanese official mission which went to Moscow recently to renew the agreement with Russia is reported to have had discussions with the Hungarian authorities on the way home. So far, though there has been a steady rise in Lebanon's imports from the Communist countries, they still amount in all to only 3.5 per cent. of all Lebanese imports in 1956; and the rate of Lebanese exports (at 3.6 per cent. of the total) has actually fallen since last year. But these various agreements, together with the increased official commercial representation referred to above, are creating a foundation on which more extensive trade could be built up—and probably will be built up if the Communist countries are prepared to buy, and able to ship, Lebanese agricultural produce.

9. The above developments need not be taken too gloomily. Successive Lebanese Governments, though consistently weak and opportunist, all accept more or less that the Lebanon's future cannot be divorced from that of the West. There are increasing rumblings from the Christian communities, who have the preponderance of brains and influence, against the tendency of Governments to go helplessly along with the tide of Arab nationalism and opposition to the West. In a minor incident at Bikfaya at the end of August, a too obvious demonstration by Communists of sympathy with Egypt produced a violent reaction from the Christian Militant "Phalangistes" which had a disproportionate effect on public opinion. The only sincere Left-wing political leader, Kamal Jumblatt, is increasingly coming out into the open as an enemy of Communism. On the other hand, a move by anti-Communist elements, Christian, Muslim and Druze, to form an

anti-Communist front fizzled out because of internal political rivalries.

10. My appreciation of the position is as follows:—

(a) it will always be difficult for Communism as a creed to establish itself in the Lebanon, whose whole political system is based on a balance of religions and the interplay of personal loyalties;

(b) Russian Governments may from time to time be able to win the co-operation of Lebanese Governments, by following policies which appeal to them; but such friendships will be transitory;

(c) it will be a long time before any cultural ties which the Communist countries can develop with the Lebanon, can hope to rival the powerful links of civilisation and history between Lebanon and Western Europe;

(d) while making little progress towards positive friendship with the Lebanon, the Communist countries are working hard and with increasing skill to undermine the friendship between Lebanon and the Western European Powers; and are having a fair success;

(e) they are undoubtedly going to exploit to the full the resentment by the Lebanese of their fancied ill-treatment by the I.P.C.; and the solution of this problem, which evokes all the susceptibilities of an ex-dependency against "imperialism," of an "underdeveloped country" against exploitation, of a small country against a great one, and of an "Arab" country against the West, will have a big influence on the success of the Russian efforts here.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Moscow, Washington, Jedda, Bagdad, Cairo, Amman, Damascus and to the Political Office with the Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

G. H. MIDDLETON.

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No. 12

THE NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received November 19)(No. 1196. Unclassified)
(Telegraphic)Beirut,
November 19, 1956.

My telegram No. 1180.

A new Government was formed yesterday evening as follows:—

- (1) Prime Minister, Interior, Justice and Information; Sami Solh (Sunni Moslem).
- (2) Foreign Affairs and Education; Charles Malek (Greek Orthodox).
- (3) Defence; General Fouad Chehab (Maronite).
- (4) Finance, National Economy and Social Affairs; Nasri Maalouf (Greek Catholic).
- (5) Public Works, Planning and P.T.T.; Mohammed Sabra (Sunni Moslem).
- (6) Health and Agriculture; Emir Majid Arslan (Druze).

2. Only Nos. (5) and (6) were in the previous Cabinet, only Nos. (1) and (6) are Deputies.

3. General Chehab is to continue to be Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

Foreign Office please pass Saving to Washington and Paris as my telegrams Nos. 117 and 98 respectively.

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No. 13

FALL OF THE CABINET OF M. ABDULLAH YAFI

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received November 26)(No. 187. Confidential) Beirut,
Sir, November 21, 1956.

I have the honour to report—with the brevity it merits—on the record of the Cabinet of Abdullah Yafi which fell on the 16th of November, 1956.

2. Though it was reshuffled in June, this is in effect the Cabinet which was voted confidence by the Lebanese Chamber on the 29th of March, 1956, on a programme whose main points were reconstruction after the earthquake of the 16th of March, solution of the Iraq Petroleum Company dispute within three months, and a somewhat biased version of the traditional Lebanese foreign policy of neutrality.

3. The earthquake problems have been well handled by Emile Boustani—in spite of the Cabinet, which he left in June. The Iraq Petroleum Company discussions were so mishandled that they ran into deadlock and led only to the loss to Lebanon of a new pipeline, and the passage of a law (the Income Tax Law of the 28th of June) which thoroughly alarmed both foreign capital and Lebanese business. In foreign policy, official Lebanon trailed at the heels of Egypt and Syria until the real Lebanon revolted and the Government was overthrown. Internal affairs have been marked by complete stagnation. No legislation of importance was passed (excepting the unfortunate Income Tax Law mentioned above) and on innumerable occasions Parliament could not function for lack of a quorum.

4. The black sheep of the Government were Yafi and the Minister of State, Sa'eb Salam. The former has shown himself ineffective to the point at which it became embarrassing to hear how he was mocked openly and to his face in the salons of Beirut. The Christian element in the Cabinet was particularly weak and ineffectual. Indeed, it appears to have been only the President who kept the Government in office so long. By contrast, however, his own position strengthened steadily as Christian Lebanon and commercial Lebanon became more and more nervous

of the Yafi-Salam line. There was much impatience at his refusal to act, but I think he was right to wait until the public had so obviously lost confidence in the Government. Finally, at a critical juncture, his calling of a conference of Arab Rulers at the time of the Anglo-French intervention over Suez, and the leading part he played in it, added greatly to his stature. When he chose to act, he could count on the universal support of all Christian opinion and many sections of moderate Moslem opinion. He seems to have taken full advantage of this position of strength.

5. Messieurs Yafi and Salam tried, by resigning in the middle of the Arab Rulers' conference, to force the President to take an extreme line against the West. But they were brushed contemptuously aside: the President refused to allow them to withdraw their resignations and in record time replaced them with a new and strong Cabinet of national unity, which has been welcomed with a universal sigh of relief.

6. The immediate crisis seems to have been surmounted. The most urgent problems of internal and external security are being handled with determination and despatch. But in the general unrest of the Middle East there are still many dangers confronting Lebanon. The inclination of the country is towards free trade and banking, a foreign policy uncommitted to rival blocs and combinations of Powers but basically friendly towards the West, and internally a liberal toleration towards all creeds. In a world torn by violent partisanship, President Chamoun may yet succeed in obtaining these ends.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Bagdad, Ankara, Tehran, Washington and Paris, to the United Kingdom High Commissioner at Karachi and to the Political Officer with the Middle East forces.

I have, &c.

G. H. MIDDLETON.

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No. 14

MEETING OF HEADS OF ARAB STATES, BEIRUT, NOVEMBER 1956

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received November 27)(No. 188. Confidential) *Beirut,*
Sir, *November 22, 1956.*

I have reported by telegram briefly on the Conference of Heads of Arab States held in Beirut on the 13th and 14th of November, and at more length on President Chamoun's impressions of it (my telegrams Nos. 1181-1183 of the 17th of November). In this despatch I shall try to present a fuller picture of what took place at the meeting, a detailed list of whose participants is enclosed.⁽¹⁾

2. The conference was first mooted by President Chamoun on the 31st of October: the date on which the Anglo-French ultimatum to Egypt expired; the day also on which a State of Emergency was declared in the Lebanon and internal security put in the hands of the army. I have no clear idea why President Chamoun wished to call such a conference. It is likely enough that the President, who has always had ambitions to play a leading part as a moderating influence in the Arab world, felt that now was his chance to take the stage. At the same time the state of affairs in the Lebanon may have provided him with a much more precise motive. Over many weeks the Moslem extremists, led by Sa'eb Salam and Abdallah Yafi, the then Minister of State and Prime Minister, had been increasingly in the ascendant, and Christian Lebanon correspondingly alarmed about this leadership. Inside the Lebanon, foreign capital had been perturbed by Sa'eb Salem's cavalier treatment of the Iraq Petroleum Company. Just across the border, the burning of three Christian schools in Aleppo had added to communal tension. The Communists seemed to be moving towards control in Syria. The action in Egypt by Israel, and then by Britain and France, had exacerbated Moslem feelings to the point at which Christian Lebanon would be in danger. Even a few Christians, including the prominent leader Hamid Frangié, had begun to reinsure by putting their money on Nasser. A dramatic effort was called for to stop the rot.

3. In the President's mind, a meeting of Arab Heads of States would offer possibilities of moderation. It is interesting to compare the personalities of this conference with those who attended the last conference of Arab Heads of States, which was held at Inchass, in Egypt, ten years ago. King Farouk had been replaced by President Nasser (who, however, was himself unable to attend); President Kouatly was still there—having been once expelled from his country—and now apparently firmly linked to the Russians. The seat of King Abdullah of Jordan was occupied by the inexperienced and headstrong Hussein; on the other hand, even he might be susceptible of being influenced by his fellow-monarchs, and among these there were greater hopes of wisdom. King Saud, who, since he took part in the Inchass Conference, had ascended the throne, had recently shown signs of second thoughts about his Egyptian ally. King Faisal, though young, was backed by a strong Government and closely linked to the West. The two new members, Sudan and Libya, were also likely to be capable of listening to reason, both of them being as yet unable to afford entirely to cut themselves off from their previous patrons. There was therefore a chance that the extremists could be put in the minority and a brake applied to the Arab nationalist feelings about which Christian Lebanon was justifiably alarmed.

4. It has not been easy to get reliable information on what happened at the conference, particularly as the press were excluded and strict censorship imposed. The Prime Ministers appear to have spent a good deal of their time discussing the agenda; and the actual meetings lasted only a day and a half. Much of the important work was done behind the scenes. Certain things seem, however, to be fairly well attested. First, President Kouatly tried to stop the conference from taking place at all (it was postponed once), and subsequently played the most extremist part at it. King Hussein also seems to have shown

⁽¹⁾ Not printed.

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himself headstrong and inflexible. On the other hand everyone appears to be agreed that Kouatly incensed King Faisal in particular, to the extent of provoking an open rebuke (the public allegations that Iraq had been continuing to pump oil to Haifa could not have failed to infuriate the King in any case). The Egyptian Ambassador to Lebanon (who together with his colleague of Damascus occupied the Egyptian seat) said little; and it is reported that in the official meetings King Saud said little but appeared to be listening very carefully indeed.

5. The main issue was the breaking of relations between the Arab States and the United Kingdom or France or both. Iraq apparently refused flatly and Lebanon also declined, although, pressed from behind by his pro-Egyptian Prime Minister Yafi and the Minister of State Sa'eb Salam, the President had to tread carefully. At one point it is believed that the Syrian delegation threatened to withdraw over this. In the event, however, each country was left to follow its own choice within the terms of the final communiqué.

6. The Syrians did their best to urge the Arab States to develop closer links with the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. I have reported in my telegram No. 1182 of the 17th of November the offers of Russian arms made by President Kouatly to President Chamoun. King Saud (who discussed privately and at length with President Chamoun his acute awareness of the Communist danger) seems to have taken the initiative in opposing this trend and Lebanon, Iraq and Libya made the counter-suggestion that the Arabs improve their relations with the United States instead.

7. A major interest of the Jordanian delegation was to acquire arms and to replace the British subsidy by payments from the Arab countries. This second point was not even put on the agenda, despite a protest from King Hussein; indeed, even President Kouatly appears to have been silent when it was proposed.

8. For whatever reasons, it seems that the Palestine problem was virtually left undis-

cussed; and no mention of it appears in the final communiqué.

9. There remained the joint support of Egypt and the joint condemnation of the "aggression" by Israel, France and Britain. This was the least that was to be expected; and was the main theme of the final communiqué (a copy of which is enclosed).⁽¹⁾ Even here the language is neither as emotional as it might have been nor precise about the action to be taken by the Arab States if the "aggressors" refused to withdraw, or repeated their aggression. There is, moreover, an insistence throughout on the role to be played by the United Nations. But the communiqué undoubtedly reflects a universal condemnation of our action by all the countries represented.

10. Much credit is due to President Chamoun for the way in which he handled a meeting which, in Lebanon at least, was not expected to achieve very much and which one feels might have been exploited by Egypt to combine the Arab world for stronger action against the West. It may be that the fact that Egypt was only formally represented reflects President Nasser's consciousness that not all aspects of his policy command Arab support. The meeting may have helped our position in other countries by the contacts it established between their Rulers. It has certainly greatly strengthened the position of President Chamoun in the Lebanon. Indeed, since it took place, he has felt strong enough to accept the resignation of his Prime Minister and the Cabinet and to introduce a small but strong Cabinet which unites the most patriotic and moderate elements among Christians and Moslems.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at the Political Office with the Middle East Forces, Washington, Paris, United Kingdom Delegation New York, Amman, Tel Aviv, Bagdad, Ankara, Tehran, Karachi, Benghazi, Tripoli, Tunis and Bahrain.

I have, &c.

G. H. MIDDLETON.

⁽¹⁾ Not printed.

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VL 1016/47

No. 15

THE NEW LEBANESE GOVERNMENT

Mr. Middleton to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received December 4)(No. 191. Confidential) *Beirut,*
Sir, *November 29, 1956.*

I have the honour to report that the Government formed on the 18th of November (as reported in my telegram No. 1196 of the following day) faced the Lebanese Chamber on the 27th of November and was accorded a vote of confidence by the overwhelming majority of 38-2. One of the two opposing voices was that of the outgoing Prime Minister, M. Yafi.

2. The new Prime Minister, M. Sami Solh (Sunni Muslim) has held the office many times before—the first time as long ago as 1942. He has the courage of his ambitions, is respected by both Christians and Muslims, and has a great deal of influence among the Muslims of "the Street." As well as being Prime Minister, he holds the key security portfolios of the Interior, Justice and Information.

3. The only other Parliamentarian in the Cabinet is the Emir Magid Arslan, the amiable nonentity who is practically a permanent member of Lebanese Cabinets by virtue of being the leading Druse. His normal home is the Defence Ministry but now the times have given this Ministry importance and the Emir has been moved on, rather like Lord Augustus Loftus. He has charge of Health and Agriculture.

4. The Ministry of Defence now goes to General Chehab, who also remains Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. It has always been the case that in the Lebanon the Commander-in-Chief is a Christian, and at a time when internal security is in the hands of the army and communal feeling is rumbling, the general becomes a very important figure. He commands respect among all communities, less because of his personal abilities than for his honesty and lack of political ambition. He was last persuaded into political life at the time of the revolution which expelled the previous President, Bechara El Khoury, in 1952; at that time he loyally kept the ring and made no attempt to seize personal power or advantage. He will not wish to stay in office longer than he has to; but as long as he stays the Government will be respected.

5. Almost as much prestige has been gained by the new Government by the addition, as Minister for Foreign Affairs, of Dr. Charles Malek, ex-Ambassador in Washington and ex-Permanent Representative at the United Nations. After over a year of the well-meaning but amateurish efforts of M. Lahoud, the Lebanon will now have as a spokesman someone of international standing. It is to be hoped, however, that his somewhat difficult temperament will allow him to work easily with his colleagues.

6. M. Mohamed Sabra (Shia Muslim) remains from the previous Cabinet, retaining the Portfolio of Public Works and adding those of Planning and Post and Telegraphs. He is a professional diplomat who was one, and probably the only, member of the previous Cabinet to emerge from its term of office with an enhanced reputation. Throughout the recent crisis he has conducted himself moderately and with due thought for the interests of the Lebanon.

7. The final figure, Nasri Maalouf (Greek Catholic) is something of an enigma. He is a lawyer and a journalist, and part owner of *Al Jarida*, one of the leading Lebanese newspapers and one by no means friendly to the British though it used to be lenient towards the French. Maalouf, who is a man of brilliant talents, has the reputation of having many Egyptian friends, and his appointment was even said at the time to have been made at the suggestion of the Egyptian Embassy. He is, however, of an honest and independent nature and would be more likely to be a link than a pawn. He takes over Finance, National Economy and Social Affairs.

8. In the circumstances in which the previous Cabinet fell (described in my despatch No. 187 of the 21st of November) no very detailed statement of Government policy was expected nor, it appeared, intended. M. Solh seemed to have said all that was required to a press correspondent on the day following his appointment: "calm in the land, a return to Lebanese traditional policy, bread for the poor, and an iron hand for trouble-makers." In the succeeding ten days, the Government has

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moved very cautiously. On the one hand security precautions have been redoubled, many arrests made, quantities of arms and explosives discovered and the responsibility traced to Palestinian refugees in the pay of the Egyptian Embassy. On the other hand, the Lebanese Government has made no protest to Egypt (at least publicly) and has maintained the strict censorship which, while preventing overt Egyptian propaganda, also prevents the widespread revelation of Egyptian subversive activities (which, however, are fairly common gossip). Moreover, though the President was ten days ago asking for arms from the United Kingdom as a matter of urgency, the Government have since repeatedly sacrificed urgency for the sake of keeping secret as far as possible the arrival of the arms supplied.

9. The Government's declaration of policy (of which the text is enclosed⁽¹⁾) turned out in the event to be discursive and to some extent placatory. It probably reflects an increased degree of nervousness on the Government's part about the strength of the Opposition both domestic and foreign, and of Syrian influence in particular. It begins with a reminder that these are critical days and an exhortation to sink private differences in the interests of the Lebanon. Law and order will be enforced, economic development cautiously pursued and inflation combated. Resumption of negotiations with foreign companies (the Iraq Petroleum Company is the chief one) is to be sought under article 2 of the Tax Law of the 26th of July, 1956. The number of Deputies is to be increased—but by how many is not stated. The main emphasis in the statement is on foreign policy, which is to be based on the United Nations Charter and the various Instruments of the Arab League. Lebanon's attitude to the Egyptian question is in uniformity with the conclusions of the Conference of Arab Rulers held in Beirut on the 13th and 14th of November (reported in my despatch No. 188 (1065/420/56) of the 22nd of November). Lebanon will support Egypt in the United Nations in her object of getting the "invaders" out of Egypt and Gaza unconditionally and without delay. A solution of the Suez Canal problem is to be sought on the basis of Egyptian sovereignty and dignity. The Government will work for a return of the Arab refugees to Palestine and a just settlement of the Palestine prob-

lem. It will support the struggles of the Algerian Arabs for freedom. Syria is twice mentioned: once when the statement agrees with the need for economic union (but in terms which seem to show that Arab economic union will be either the aim or the excuse of Lebanese policy); and once when it underlines the particular importance of understanding with Syria. On the details of domestic policy very little is said and what there is is vague.

10. In form the debate on this statement was largely a debate on Abdullah Yafi's policy and resignation. It reflected, however, to a great extent the currents of present public opinion. Of this, the Moslem portion is still predominantly pro-Nasser and anti-British; and relations between Moslems as a whole and the Christians are potentially bad. But the Christians and the more responsible Moslems are beginning to show increasing realism for a number of reasons. First, they appreciate the danger of a general conflagration; secondly, they are increasingly awake to the peril of Communism and nervous of its spread in neighbouring Syria; and thirdly, they are beginning to feel the economic pinch. There is moreover a good deal of genuine indignation over the recent bomb incidents, which are instigated by a foreign Power and felt to be alien to Lebanese traditions.

11. In the debate Abdullah Yafi recovered some of his dignity by making a calm and reasonable speech in defence of his policy and, noticeably, going out his way to avoid any criticism of the President. There were sharp divisions among those who followed. Two or three hotheads, all Moslems, spoke violently against the "aggressors"; two speakers of a much higher quality—Kamal Jumblatt (Druse) and Ghassan Tuéni (Christian)—denounced Communism. Ghassan Tuéni and Joseph Chader (Christian) drew the Chamber's attention to the recent bombing incidents in the Lebanon; and when Hamid Frangié (Christian, but one who in recent months has pledged himself to the Egyptian line) created a minor sensation by accusing the Lebanon of harbouring plots against Syria, the ex-Foreign Minister, Selim Lahoud, ran quickly to the defence of Lebanon's past foreign policy and made counter-accusations of plots in Syria against the Lebanon. The main burden of Ghassan Tuéni's speech, which was the best of them, was that the Lebanon must choose between East and West; and though the Lebanon

⁽¹⁾ Not printed.

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of course can do no such thing, the same dilemma preoccupied several of the other speakers.

12. This Government is an excellent one for present purposes. It is not, however, likely to last long and in any case must go soon in view of the approach of the elections in May 1957. So long as it is in, the personal ambitions of a number of the Deputies remain unsatisfied; and there is sure to be trouble before long over the question of the increase of the number of Deputies. It is, however, as good an assurance as one could

have for the stability of Lebanon in the uneasy months to come.

13. I am sending copies of this despatch without enclosure to Her Majesty's Representatives at Washington, Paris, Teheran, Ankara, Amman, Bagdad, the Political Officer with the Middle East Forces, the United Kingdom High Commissioner at Karachi and to Mr. E. M. Rose in Levant Department of the Foreign Office.

I have, &c.

G. H. MIDDLETON.

APPENDIX

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

VL 1902/1

No. 16

LEBANON: HEADS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 16)

(No. 62. Confidential) *Beirut,*
 Sir, *April 9, 1956.*
 I have the honour to transmit herewith the annual report on Heads of Foreign Missions accredited to the Lebanon.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT.

Enclosure

Lebanon: Heads of Foreign Missions

(Passages marked with an asterisk are reproduced from previous reports.)

Argentina

Ambassador designate: Dr. Carlos Maria Bollini Shaw.

Austria

Dr. Kurt Farbowsky, Minister (March 7, 1956).
 Was formerly Chargé d'Affaires, a post which has only this year been raised to Minister rank. He is a pleasant, friendly individual and was previously in the Foreign Ministry at Vienna and before that at Brussels. He has never visited England but speaks some English. He is married.

Belgium

M. Fernand Scynaev, Minister (August 13, 1952).
 *A friendly, middle-aged man of wide experience outside the Middle East, mostly consular; his interests mainly economic. A charming wife. Both speak English and I am sure like us. (Written in 1953.) Has become slightly cynical after four years in the Middle East.

Brazil

M. F. Gualberto de Oliveira, Ambassador (January 25, 1955).
 M. Oliveira, who is the first Brazilian representative here to hold rank as Ambassador, was previously, I understand, a senior administrative official in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Rio de Janeiro. He is married and has one married daughter.

Chile

M. Ramon Huidobro, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (January 10, 1956).

China (Nationalist)

Dr. Kiding Wang, Minister (March 4, 1955).

Colombia

Dr. Rodolfo Garcia Garcia, Minister (June 14, 1949).
 *Never seen except at Diplomatic Corps gatherings, where he huddles together with the other South Americans. (Written in 1954.)

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Czechoslovakia

M. Cenek Herold, Minister (June 18, 1954).
 M. Herold is a comparatively young man, tall, fair and of good appearance. Unlike other Communist diplomats here, he appears to have a happy disposition and seems most anxious to be pleasing and friendly. I suspect him, however, of being a rather better trimmer than most. Before being appointed to a diplomatic post he made a name for himself in Prague in the catering trade. He is said to be overbearing towards, and unpopular with, his staff.

Egypt

Major-General Abdel Hamid Ghaleb, Ambassador (October 26, 1954).

General Ghaleb, who is in his middle forties, is married and has two sons in their teens. As a cadet he was at the Royal Military College, Woolwich. He was Military Attaché both in London (1945 to 1948) and afterwards in Washington. General Ghaleb makes no secret of his friendly connections with the British in the past. Events following the Turco-Iraqi Pact have not diminished his personal friendliness. He is an M.B.E.

France

M. Louis Roché, Ambassador (January 25, 1956).
 Came here from Canberra, and speaks perfect English, having spent twenty out of the last thirty years of his life in the United Kingdom. He was at Trinity College, Cambridge, for a time. Very friendly and well disposed. Married.

German Federal Republic

Dr. Herbert Noehring, Minister (May 20, 1953).
 *A rather distinguished-looking man, unmarried, in the early fifties. Sword-scarred cheek and an eye and look whose inborn hardness an instinct for the main chance and the veneer of professional diplomacy do not completely mask. Anxious to be friendly to us and bitterly recriminative against Ribbentrop. Speaks English fluently from several years in America. Also served in pre-war Bagdad. (Written in 1953.)

Greece

M. Georges St. Seferiades, Minister (January 15, 1953).
 Also accredited to Bagdad, Damascus and Amman. A charming elderly man, married. A post-war diplomatist, he came here from London and seems genuinely pro-British. Speaks sufficient English. Said to be the leading poet of modern Greece. Was chief of Greek Information Services abroad during the war and later private secretary to Archbishop Damaskinos when Regent. Is genuinely distressed at the deterioration in Anglo-Greek relations.

Holy See

Mgr. Guiseppe Beltrami, Nuncio (December 2, 1950).
 A dignified ecclesiastic of the old school with polished, if a trifle fussy, manners. Anxious to be friendly and having, from his own account, narrowly

escaped being lynched during anti-clerical riots in South America, is very sensitive to "confessional" differences among the Lebanese. Like all Catholics and Maronites in this country, he is fearful of the further growth of the Moslem element in the population.

Indonesia

Legation now being established. No Minister as yet.

Iran

M. Rahmat Atabaki, Minister (July 5, 1954).
Was Consul-General here some ten years ago before filling diplomatic appointments in Europe. Speaks French. Professes himself a sincere friend of Britain. His wife is related to General Zahedi. Several children.

Iraq

Saiyid Jamil Abdul Wahhab, Ambassador (July 6, 1955).

Active and intelligent in making contacts, but not very effective in using them. Very friendly. A relative of Nuri-es-Said. Married, with seven children.

Italy

Signor Pio Antonio Archi, Ambassador (April 24, 1955).

Previously Minister (since November 6, 1953).
A good professional diplomatist of the "official" type, in the late forties. Was formerly head of the Personnel Department in Rome and before that Counsellor in Cairo. Co-operative where our interests coincide. His wife, a Florentine, friendly but a heavy, peasant sort of person.

Japan

Dr. Hiroo Furuuchi, Minister (January 21, 1955).
Superficially very affable and friendly. Speaks German and English very well. Married.

Jordan

M. Abdulhamid Siraj, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (since November 1, 1955).

Liberia

M. Henry Gemayel, Minister (May 4, 1955).
Formerly Chargé d'Affaires (from February 10, 1951).
Is a Lebanese permanently resident in the Lebanon and thus holds a sort of local honorary appointment which the Diplomatic Corps recognise only on sufferance.

Mexico

Sr. Marco A. Almazan, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (September 1, 1953).
Intelligent, friendly and quite well informed. A good type of Latin American diplomat, with an attractive wife. Both speak excellent English.

Netherlands

M. Henk Goemans, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (June 7, 1952).
A career Foreign Service officer whose service has been mostly consular. A widower of just over fifty and to be trusted as a friend of Britain. Speaks English, French and Russian fluently; was previously in Cairo.

Poland

M. Zigmunt Zawadowski, Minister (August 17, 1944).
Until the enforced dissolution in July 1945 of the Government which he claims to represent, M. Zawadowski enjoyed a good position here.

Since then he has maintained a brave front in the face of an increasingly difficult position due mostly to lack of funds, not to mention the embarrassing presence of Soviet and satellite colleagues in the Diplomatic Corps. Is particularly well informed about the political situation here and about the private lives of Communist representatives both here and in neighbouring countries. Always ready to put his knowledge and information at our disposal, and generous in his expressions of gratitude for British help to former members of the Polish Brigade who, for one reason or another, mostly illness, remain in this country. Visits London regularly once a year. Has a wife who lives mostly in Paris and a daughter married in the United States.

Saudi Arabia

Sheikh Abdul Aziz Kuheimi, Ambassador (September 12, 1955).
A shrewd and ruthless individual, but superficially friendly. Has been a slightly moderating influence on Saudi anti-British policy. Speaks only Arabic.

Soviet Union

M. S. P. Kiktev, Minister (February 6, 1956).
A small man with a sinister record. Very active in promoting Russian interests. Married.

Spain

Ambassador designate: Rafael de los Casares y Moya, Count Rabago.

Switzerland

Post at present vacant, on transfer of former Minister to Cape Town.

Turkey

M. Cevdet Dülger, Ambassador (May 18, 1955).
Previously Minister (December 15, 1954).
Speaks quite good French. Started his career nearly twenty years ago in London and afterwards went to Cairo. Is friendly and forthcoming. His former wife is now married to Aly Yehia, the well-known cotton broker of Alexandria. M. Dülger, who has custody of the child, a daughter, has not remarried. Somewhat tactless in his diplomacy and inclined to press in and out of season.

United States

Mr. Donald R. Heath, Ambassador (March 9, 1955).
Came to Beirut from Saigon accompanied by his wife but not his children, who are grown up. He is frank, straightforward and friendly towards Britain.

Uruguay

Sr. José Aiub Manzor, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (September 9, 1951).
*As his name implies, comes of an emigrant family of Syrian origin. He is friendly, but our paths seldom cross. (Written in 1954.)

Venezuela

Post at present vacant.

Yemen

Dr. Adnan Tarcici, Chargé d'Affaires (October 13, 1955).
Has shown himself friendly and anxious to make friends. An unusually cultivated representative for Yemen, married to a French wife. Speaks excellent English.

Yugoslavia

M. Milos Lalovic, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (February 26, 1954).
A friendly but rather inconspicuous person. Not well informed—partly no doubt because he is a bad

linguist. His (second) wife is shy and shows signs of having recently left Yugoslavia by having to refer all her opinions for confirmation to her husband. Both are very well disposed to the British.

Ministers Accredited to the Lebanon but Resident Elsewhere

Afghanistan (Bagdad)

Chargé d'Affaires, M. Abdul Manan Saidi (28th October, 1955).

Cuba (Cairo)

Vacant.

Ethiopia (Cairo)

M. Ato Marcus Hanna, Chargé d'Affaires, *a.i.* (1st August, 1953).

Denmark (Cairo)

Vacant.

Finland (Ankara)

M. Bruno Kivikoski (1st October, 1954).

Netherlands (Cairo)

M. Willem Cnoop Koopmans (3rd December, 1951).

Norway (Cairo)

M. Christian Prah! Reusch (4th October, 1954).

Peru (Cairo)

Vacant.

Sweden (Cairo)

M. C. Brynolf J. Eng (15th December, 1955).

APPENDIX

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

VL 1012/1

No. 17

LEADING PERSONALITIES IN THE LEBANON

Mr. Scott to Mr. Selwyn Lloyd. (Received April 27)

(No. 78. Confidential) *Beirut,*
 Sir, *April 25, 1956.*

I have the honour to transmit herewith the annual report on leading personalities in the Lebanon.

I have, &c.

I. D. SCOTT.
 (Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires).

Enclosure

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133. Constantin Zuraik.

1. Ibrahim Abdel Aal

Born 1917, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Jesuit University, Beirut, and French School of Engineering, Beirut. Family of Egyptian origin. Engineer by training; civil servant by adoption. Formerly Director-General of Public Works; now Director-General of Concessionary Companies. Intelligent, hard-working and, as far as is known, honest, but without many social graces.

2. Robert Abela

Born 1908, Sidon; Roman Catholic; educated Jesuit University. Married. Owner-editor of (Arab language) newspaper, *Zaman*. Manager for Beirut of Arab News Agency. Now in second year as president of Lebanese Press Syndicate. Not a strong man but co-operative and useful. A British subject (Maltese origin—dual nationality) who speaks no English but is instinctively pro-British.

3. Habib Abi-Chahla

Born about 1900, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated American University, Beirut; Lawyer. Formerly supported President Emile Eddé but broke with him in 1943. In November 1943 remained loyal to Sheikh Béchara el-Khoury in his conflict with the French, and headed resistance group in the mountains for the eleven days during which President el-Khoury and his Government were interned; during this period he acted as Head of State. President of the Chamber, 1946-47. Deputy since 1943. Several times a Minister. Now legal adviser to the Tapline Company and very influential in both political and commercial circles, in particular he has many American contacts and is much involved in the political ramifications of the oil business. A notorious womaniser, of which he boasts openly, he holds the Order of Purity and Chastity awarded by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch. Had a severe heart attack in February 1954 from which he has now completely recovered and is once more accepting public duties.

4. Halim Abou-Izzeddin

Born 1913, Mount Lebanon; Druze; educated at American University, Beirut. Bachelor. Lebanese Foreign Service; after serving in Cairo transferred

to Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1950; he became head of the Political Section in 1951 and Chief of Protocol in 1953. Acting Director-General, Ministry of Information, March 1954-March 1955. In April 1955 transferred back to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Head of Protocol; later appointed Assistant Secretary-General but on being returned to his former appointment as Head of the Political Section in January 1956 he ceased coming to the office in protest. Honest, intelligent and has political ambitions. Visited United Kingdom at invitation of Her Majesty's Government August 1954. A Lebanese delegate to Afro-Asian Conference, Bandung, April 1955. Co-operative with this embassy. Speaks good English.

5. Joseph Abou-Khater

Born Zanlé about 1905; Greek Catholic; educated Jesuit University, Beirut, and studied law in France. Married. Lawyer. A leader of the anti-Skaf faction in Zahlé. Formerly Lebanese Minister in Mexico; appointed Minister at Rome, 1953. Clever and politically ambitious.

6. Ibrahim Ahdab

Born Beirut 1902; Sunni Moslem; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Former contractor and engineer. Lebanese Minister at Ankara since 1947. Honest and intelligent but indecisive. Transferred to Berne in February 1954. Sent to Ankara in February 1955 as Special Envoy mainly to prepare Lebanese President's visit to Turkey and to study on the spot development of situation arising out of Bagdad Pact. Appointed Ambassador to the Court of St. James in July 1955.

7. Nazim Akkari

Born 1898, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. The best Civil Servant in the Lebanon. Director-General of the Prime Minister's Office since 1945. Temporarily Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, September 1952. Honest, shrewd and experienced. A most useful and helpful source of advice and information.

8. Naim Amiouni

Born 1916. Worked for some seven years with Iraq Petroleum Company, from which he gained respect for British administrative methods. A career diplomat, has served in Russia and Brazil. Assistant Director of Economic Section of Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1953-55. Appointed Director at end of 1955 and promoted to rank of Minister Plenipotentiary. Excellent linguist. Able and ambitious, he is co-operative with this Embassy although his political ideas are Leftish. Wife is intelligent and attractive.

9. Fouad Ammoun

Born 1899, Deir el-Kamar; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Former judge. Now Secretary-General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with rank of ambassador. Well educated with a broad mind and good grasp of his profession. Friendly and helpful to this embassy within his powers but not a strong character, and without much apparent influence on policy. Reputed to wish to enter politics. Visited the United Kingdom in April 1956 as guest of the British Council.

10. Hussein Aouei

Born 1902, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Greek Catholic College, Beirut. Married. Of humble origins but while still young made a large fortune in Saudi Arabia, where he still has many contacts. He has many other business interests, including, it is said, smuggling. Formerly Deputy, 1947-51. In 1951 formed caretaker Cabinet to supervise elections which he did successfully and honestly. Still regarded as a possible "non-political" Prime Minister but somewhat discredited for his financial connexions with

the family of President el-Khoury. Clever but an unprincipled opportunist. Took a leading part in combating Bagdad Pact and to this end joined hands with Kemal Joumlatt and the Communists.

11. George Arida

Born about 1898, in Australia; Maronite; educated abroad, mainly in Australia, Canada and Mexico. Married. Formerly Honorary British Vice-Consul at Tripoli, having returned to his family home there and opened a textile factory which earned him great wealth during the Second World War. His wife has social ambitions (e.g., his daughter married Sheikh Khalil el-Khoury (No. 73) but a Papal annulment was obtained in January 1956) and they are anxious to cut a dash (e.g., their purchase after the war of Hitler's yacht which they sold at a heavy loss). But he himself is a mild and amiable character with little personality.

12. Mustapha el-Aris

Born 1912, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; primary education only. Married. Trade union leader and agitator. Started life as printer, at one time chairman of Printers' Union. Left Lebanon in March 1953 for medical treatment in Moscow and other Iron-Curtain countries and has not yet returned (April 1955). Very militant Communist; imprisoned several times.

13. Fernand Arsanios

Born 1898, Batroun; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Judge. *Persona non grata* under President el-Khoury. Appointed Procureur Général of the Supreme Court in February 1953; well known for his honesty and political independence.

14. Emir Megid Arslan

Born about 1908, Choueifat; Druze; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Widower. Anti-German during the war; helped resist Vichy France. Several times Minister since 1943 as Druze representative, loyal to President el-Khoury; bitter opponent of Kemal Joumlatt. A cheerful, uneducated and highly venal feudal chieftain with a boyish passion for dressing-up and firearms. In the habit of smuggling cattle into Israel. Again Minister in the second Yafi Cabinet under the Chamoun régime. Accompanied President on his visit to South America in May 1954. Again Minister of Defence in the Cabinets of Sami Solh (1954), Rachid Keramé (1955) and Abdallah Yafi (1956). Having lost his wife in 1953 he remarried in February 1956.

15. Ahmed el-Assad

Born 1905, Taibé, South Lebanon; Shia Moslem; primary education only. Married to the clever daughter (who never appears in public) of his uncle, from whom he has inherited the feudal paramountcy in South Lebanon. Several times Minister since 1941; President of the Chamber of Deputies from 1951 until October 1953. The election of his rival, Adel Osseiran, as President of the Chamber since then and the appointment, twice, of another rival, Kazem el-Khalil, as Minister, made him side with the Opposition. He attacked the President personally, organising meetings, &c., in which operations he was financed by Saudi money. A reconciliation between him and the President, however, having taken place in February 1956, he is now pacified and has resumed his visits to the Palace. Although he puts on a pro-British façade and speaks some English, he is an unprincipled rogue with only crafty cunning, who has done very well out of the balance of power in the Lebanon and is opposed to any real

reform. Despite his official position, he undermines authority by all lucrative means, including the sale of parliamentary seats and smuggling on the Israel border.

16. Georges Assi

Born 1908, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. A municipal official until January 1953 when he was appointed Mohafez of Beirut. Married to a sister of Habib Abi-Chahla (No. 3). Quite presentable. Honest and energetic but not very intelligent.

17. Gabriel Assouad

Born 1896, Beirut; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. A Civil Servant; appointed Director-General of the Interior in January 1953. Honest but weak; lacks initiative and personality. Unintelligent and servile to the powers that be; was retired by Government in April 1955 because of age-limit.

18. Raif Bellama

Born 1897, Beirut; Maronite; educated American University, Beirut. Married. Lecturer in bacteriology at American University, Beirut. Minister of Education, 1949. Appointed Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab League in 1953. Witty and a good speaker but a political light-weight.

19. Rashid Beydoun

Born about 1897, Beirut; Shia Moslem; primary education. Married. Deputy since 1943. Twice Cabinet Minister. A genial Moslem hack politician of no great significance. Has founded, partly with his own money, a large Shia Moslem college in Beirut.

20. Amin Beyhum

Born 1907, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Elected Deputy 1951 but has since greatly disappointed his electors and has never spoken in the Chamber. Did not stand for the 1953 legislative elections.

21. Jawad Boulos

Born 1900, Tripoli; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Deputy and Minister for Foreign Affairs under French Mandate. Now an unsuccessful and disgruntled ex-politician posing as an elder statesman, ready to resume office *pour sauver la patrie*. Engaged in writing an interminable History of the Near East (he has now reached about 3,000 B.C.) about which, as most other things, he is a crashing bore. Has, since 1955, put himself under the wing of the United States Embassy in Beirut.

22. Philippe Boulos

Born 1902, North Lebanon; Greek Orthodox. Married. Lawyer and politician. Several times Minister since 1941. A safe figure for a Greek Orthodox vacancy in any Government; in the intervals resumes his place as a judge. Vice-President of the Chamber since 1952. Failed in legislative elections of 1953. Colourless with an affable veneer.

23. Emile Boustani

Born 1907, Sidon; Maronite (with Protestant intervals when it suits him); educated American University of Beirut and Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Married to a pleasant redhead. A self-made contractor of great wealth. Head of the C.A.T. (Contracting and Trading) Company with ramifications in the Arab countries and Persian Gulf. Deputy since 1951. Strong Pan-Arabist posing as a "candid friend" of Britain with the accent on "candid." Anxious to be President of the Republic, he makes his commercial

interests serve his political ambitions and *vice versa*. His main line is to gain popularity and notoriety by consistent opposition to the powers that be. The *enfant terrible* of Lebanese politics, he should not be trusted out of eyesight or earshot but his skin is so thick that he is quite an engaging rogue. Speaks excellent English. Appointed Minister of Public Works and of Planning under the Premiership of Abdallah Yafi on March 19, 1956.

24. Nicolas Bustras

Born 1896, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. A rich socialite of a rather effeminate type. Entered official life as Chief of Protocol to the President of the Republic, 1937. Resigned 1938. Re-appointed 1943; later transferred in same capacity to Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1949. Holds rank of Minister Plenipotentiary. Active in intrigues leading to fall of President el-Khoury in September 1952. A quarrelsome chatterbox but intelligent and well informed, with pleasant social manners.

25. Fouad Chader

Born 1910. Has spent the greater part of his career in the Customs, where he established a reputation for honesty and good administration. Has been Director of Civil Aviation since 1953. Is friendly and intelligent.

26. Camille Nimr Chamoun

Born 1901, Deir el-Kamar; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married to the former Zelfa Tabet, an attractive woman of mixed Irish and Lebanese extraction; his sons have been educated in England. President of the Republic since September 1952; formerly lawyer and politician. Minister of the Interior, September 1943; arrested by the French November 1943, since when strongly prejudiced against France. Lebanese Minister in London 1944-47. Minister of Finance 1947 and of the Interior 1947 to May 1948. The most consistent leader of the Opposition to President el-Khoury from 1948 to September 1952, when he was himself elected President, defeating Hamid Frangié. Although honest and with genuine reformist sympathies, he has proved too weak so far to pursue a consistent policy as President. Of attractive presence, he has relied too much on his personal popularity and has been a disappointment to the Opposition and the despair of the old political bosses whom he refuses to consult. Despite his British connexions and superficial Anglicisms, his foreign policy has been largely dominated by Arab sentiments, although he would undoubtedly support the West in any conflict with communism. His attractive personality makes excellent first impressions, especially on women, but his intellectual woolliness tends to become exasperating. Speaks excellent English.

27. Joseph Nimr Chamoun

Born 1896, Deir el-Kamar; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères and American University of Beirut. Married. Brother of President Camille Chamoun. Director-General of Public Works 1944-48. Director-General of Inspection Department since June 1952, for which rôle he is utterly unsuited. An industrious subordinate. While carrying on with his job at the Inspection Department was also appointed acting Chief of the Telephone Department in 1954.

28. R. P. Charles de Chamussy

Born about 1903; Père Recteur (Head) of St. Joseph's University (Jesuits). While a convinced French Jesuit, he has charming manners and is always friendly to this embassy.

29. Joseph Charbel

Born 1896, Zahlé; Maronite; educated Collège de la Sagesse. Bachelor. Procureur Général 1943-52. Now President of the Conseil d'Etat. Victim of an aggression by a member of the P.P.S., as a result of which he lay in hospital for several months. Honest and well educated but without much moral courage.

30. Emir Abdel-Aziz Chehab

Born 1908 at Baabda, Mt. Lebanon. Maronite. Great grandson of Emir Bechir Chehab II. Educated at Jesuit College. Formerly a magistrate then Mohafez of North Lebanon and later of South Lebanon. Appointed Director-General of the Interior in August 1955. Very clever, cunning and an opportunist. Helpful to us.

31. Emir Farid Chehab

Born 1909; Maronite; educated privately. Married. Head of Counter Espionage Department under the French Mandate. Imprisoned by Free French for contacts with Vichy 1942-43. Re-entered Police Department 1943 and became Director of Sûreté Générale 1948. A good linguist who gets on well with the British, but is not as deeply imbued with a sense of civic duty as he would have them believe. Extravagant and somewhat of a playboy but honest and conscientious.

32. General Fouad Chehab

Born 1901, Beirut; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères Maristes, Jounieh. Married to a French wife. Trained in the French army and Commander-in-chief of the Lebanese Armed Forces since 1945. Gained great prestige for keeping the peace during "revolution" of September 1952, when he was temporarily Prime Minister. Honest and loyal and determined to preserve the political independence of the army. His personal charm is greater than his intelligence and he is the exasperation of his more politically-minded subordinates.

33. Emir Jamil Chehab

Born 1898, Beirut; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères Maristes, Jounieh. Married. Civil Servant who served in Finance and Customs departments with distinction. Now head of Cour des Comptes (Audit Department). Although hard-working and conscientious, his obstinacy and narrow-mindedness have brought him into trouble with his superiors. But his independent judgment is valued by the I.P.C.

34. Emir Khaled Chehab

Born 1891, Hasbaya; Sunni Moslem; primary education. Married. Formerly Prime Minister and President of the Chamber under the French Mandate. Lebanese Minister at Amman 1948-52 when he was recalled by President Chamoun to become Prime Minister. Resumed his duties at Amman, with the rank of Ambassador in 1953. Honest and possessed of a certain peasant shrewdness, but his weakness and a certain appearance of imbecility were not calculated to inculcate respect for his Government. He is, however, well meaning and friendly.

35. Georges Choueiri

Born 1909, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated Jesuit University of Beirut. Merchant. Appointed municipal councillor in 1951 but soon resigned "finding the whole thing too dirty to work in." Again appointed municipal councillor in February 1953 and elected Vice-President of Beirut Municipality, but resigned in 1954 and was immediately afterwards appointed vice-chairman of the Electricity Company's Board. Very honest and straightforward. As secretary for some years of the Association of

Businessmen he is the most important member of this influential organisation. The victim of an incurable illness, his health is rapidly declining.

36. Ahmed Daouk

Born 1899, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Prime Minister 1941-42 but lost influence through weakness and incompetence. Appointed Lebanese Minister in Paris 1944 and promoted Ambassador in 1953. Put on the retired list in December 1955, but by virtue of a special arrangement he is still carrying on his duties as Ambassador in Paris. Often spoken of as a possible "neutral" Prime Minister.

37. Nadim Demechkié

Born 1915, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married to an English wife. Lebanese Foreign Service. Served London, Ottawa, and Cairo where he has been Lebanese Chargé d'Affaires since 1953. An able and likeable young man, he is inclined to advocate Arab nationalist views and wishes to enter political life. Speaks good English.

38. Pierre Eddé

Born 1920, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Son of late President Emile Eddé; married 1950 a rich Lebanese of Brazil. Politician and champion of Christian rights in the Lebanon. Although active in politics ever since his childhood, his first entry into public life was his election as Deputy of Mount Lebanon in 1951. Minister of Finance under A. Yafi from August 1953 to March 1954. Shrewd and intriguer.

39. Raymond Eddé

Born 1918, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Bachelor. Lawyer. Elder son of President Emile Eddé from whom he inherited leadership of the Francophile "Bloc National." Elected Deputy in July 1953. Honest and likeable.

40. Jean Fattal

Born 1903, Damascus; Syrian Catholic; educated in Austria. Married. Merchant and part owner of a firm of commission agents in Damascus and Beirut. Personally honest but a shrewd money-maker with his ear close to the political ground.

41. Hamid Frangié

Born 1905, Zghorta; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Tripoli, and French School of Law, Beirut. Married. Lawyer and politician and Deputy. Since 1941 several times Minister, usually of Foreign Affairs, the last time being in the Sami Solh Cabinet of 1954 which he joined in 1955 when it was reshuffled; he resigned, however, in August 1955, accusing the President of undermining his work. This led to renewed tension between him and the Palace which has now almost disappeared, at least on the surface. One of the main leaders of the Christian faction in North Lebanon. Although at first a sturdy champion of an independent Lebanon, has steadily repaired his fences with the French and was backed by them to succeed President el-Khoury in 1952, after he had tentatively come out in support of the Opposition. His disappointment at not being elected led to a partial estrangement with President Chamoun and his interest turned largely to building up his fortunes as a corporation lawyer, but he is still quite young and intelligent, with a wide knowledge of Western European culture and he cannot fail to return as a political force in the future. Although a true Lebanese he is more able than most to look at events through international spectacles. In 1955 was the target of very strong attacks by his political opponents of North Lebanon with whom he made his peace a few months later.

42. Moussa de Freige

Born 1910, Beirut; Roman Catholic; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Has the hereditary papal title of Marquis which he likes to use. A wealthy socialite and race-horse owner, connected with the family of President el-Khoury and unpopular among Moslems. Had assumed responsibility for direction of *Le Jour* even before the death of his uncle, Michel Chiha, in December 1954. Speaks English.

43. Maurice Gemayel

Born 1910, Bikfaya; Maronite; educated Jesuit University and French School of Law, Beirut. Married. Lawyer. Leading Phalangist; cousin and brother-in-law of Pierre Gemayel (No. 44). Seeks to promote irrigation and electrical schemes. Relatively honest and intelligent.

44. Pierre Gemayel

Born about 1909, Bikfaya; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Leader of the Phalange Movement which affects extreme Christian and Lebanese nationalist in opposition to Moslem Pan-Arab ideas. Although one of the most vigorous, reformist politicians outside the Chamber, he is probably more noisy than influential. A director of *Amal*.

45. Colonel Jean Aziz Ghazi

Born 1900, Beirut; Maronite; educated Egypt and French Army Schools. Married to a French wife. Although next in seniority to General Chehab in Lebanese army has little say in its affairs. A pleasant and vigorous personality, but discipline seems to irk him and he is inclined to rather loose anti-Western talk, which may reflect political ambitions and restlessness in his present job. Speaks English. In January 1954 was accused of preparing a military *coup* directed against his Commander-in-Chief and, as a result of this, was put on pension without being court-martialled.

46. Farid Habib

Greek Orthodox from Kousba, Koura. Born 1908. Studied in Collège des Frères, Tripoli, and obtained degree of law from Jesuit School, Beirut, about 1934. Appointed magistrate in 1929, then Kaimakham (sub-district officer). Director of the Etat Civil from 1942; promoted Director-General December 1955. Fairly honest; friendly to us and co-operative. Well-known in Greek Orthodox clerical circles. Married.

47. Ibrahim Haidar

Born 1888, Bekaa; Shia Moslem; educated locally and in France. Married. Several times Deputy and Minister, but failed in 1953 legislative elections. A tiny little man whose bumptiousness and seniority in the Chamber gives his remarks more weight than they deserve. A crafty and dishonest political intriguer who lost his last ministerial post for complicity in hashish smuggling.

48. Selim Haidar

Born 1912, Baalbek; Shia Moslem. Doctor of law, Paris. Judge and poet turned politician, with an attractive and lively wife. Lebanese Minister in Tehran from 1948 till October 1952, when he became Cabinet Minister. Elected Deputy in 1953. An amiable and gentle but colourless figure with intellectual leanings. Minister of Agriculture and Post and Telegraphs in the Sami Solh Cabinet of September 1954. Partisan of Peace.

49. Georges Haimari

Born 1898, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. "Chef de Cabinet" to the President of the Republic 1920-43 and from 1945. O.B.E. 1947. Chairman of Lebanese Government Commission on Palestine Refugees since 1948. Honest until a few years ago when he began to feather his own and his family's nest. Much under the influence of his father confessors but very friendly and helpful to the British. He is rather an old woman and his relations with President Chamoun, though strained at first, are now steadily improving.

50. Abdallah Hajj

Born 1898, Ghobairi (near Beirut); Shia Moslem, educated American University of Beirut. Married. School-teacher in Bagdad, then a politician. Elected Deputy in 1951 in the Opposition list where he still belongs and re-elected in 1953. Dishonest but dynamic. A rather unsavoury character with a nuisance value in politics.

51. Georges Hakim

Born 1914, Tripoli, Greek Orthodox; educated at American University of Beirut. Married to an American wife. Professor and politician; after teaching economics at the American University of Beirut joined Lebanese Foreign Service and served at Lebanese Legation at Washington and the permanent Lebanese delegation at the United Nations. Appointed Minister of Finance and National Economy October 1952; also Foreign Minister in February 1953. Honest and very intelligent, but stubborn and inclined to take an academic approach. Holds Left-wing economic views which he applies skilfully and with more political sense than appears at first sight. During the year 1954 underwent several surgical operations both in the Lebanon and in the United States. He recovered and although still weak resumed work as Assistant Secretary-General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs until he was transferred to Bonn as Minister in 1955. Was recalled temporarily at the end of that year to advise in the negotiations with the I.P.C. Returned again from Bonn in April 1956 to become Minister of National Economy.

52. Sabri Hamadé

Born about 1903, Bekaa; Shia Moslem; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married to daughter of Ahmed al-Assad (No. 15). Deputy and former Minister. President of the Chamber of Deputies 1943-46 and 1948-51. A crude and venal politician whose local influence in the Bekaa gives him a nuisance value. A notorious hashish smuggler and one of the principal targets of the reformers.

53. Saïd Hamadé

Born about 1895, Mount Lebanon; Druze; educated American University of Beirut. Widower. Professor of applied economics, American University of Beirut. The Laski of the Lebanon (in moderation). Inspires the generally Left-wing economic views of such people as Georges Hakim and Kemal Joumlatt. But a very gentle revolutionary with much charm and a good command of English.

54. Joseph Harfouche

Born 1914, Beirut Maronite. Unmarried. Educated Jesuit University. Served in French Consulate-General in Cairo until 1945, when he was attached to Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Has served as Chargé d'Affaires in Brussels and as Minister to the Holy See. Appointed head of the Political Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1953. Strongly anti-Communist and pro-Western in political outlook. Anxious to promote closer

relations between Lebanon and the Western Powers. Intelligent, friendly but slightly superficial. Reappointed Minister to the Vatican in 1955.

55. Chafik Hatem

Born 1910, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University and French School of Law, Beirut. Married. Judge. Senior and leading official of the Ministry of Justice until February, 1953, when he became acting Director-General of that Ministry. An efficient subordinate who knows how to make himself useful, especially to President Chamoun, as a draftsman and expert on legal matters. Although fairly honest, he is a time-server and intriguer.

56. Charles Helou

Born 1912, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Lawyer and politician. Associated with *Le Jour*. Lebanese Minister to the Holy See 1947-49; Minister for Foreign Affairs 1951-52. Minister of Justice in the Government of Sami Solh of September 1954. An intelligent and patriotic Lebanese of the Christian persuasion with a close eye on his own advancement.

57. Khalil Hibri

Born 1907, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Wealthy businessman (cars and real estate). Arab nationalist but makes no secret of his belief in co-operation with the British. Spends lavishly to ensure his popularity among lower class Moslems of Beirut. Influential in Moslem organisations. Opposed A. Yafi in the 1953 elections but failed. Honest, loyal and generous.

58. Joseph Hitti

Born 1896, Shemlan; Maronite; educated American University of Beirut, followed by medical studies in the United States of America and Canada. Married. Brother of Professor Philippe Hitti, the Arab historian, of Princeton University, United States of America. Elected Deputy in 1947; stood again in 1951 but failed. Honest and a good physician without much personality or presence. His judgment in political matters is somewhat distorted by personal disappointments. But he makes himself useful as a political go-between and "fixer." Enthusiastic supporter of proposed British School.

59. Kemal Joumlatt

Born 1914, Mount Lebanon; Druze; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married to a lively and intelligent member of the Arslan clan. Deputy since 1943 and feudal leader of the Druze faction opposed to the Arslans. He is also leader of the Socialist and Progressive Party and the principal exponent of ideological socialism in the Lebanon, which he expounds on the platform and through his newspaper *Al Anba*. His party symbol is the crossed pick-axe and pencil. His reformist views and his personal attacks were a main motive force leading to President el-Khoury's fall in September 1952. But he has since not concealed his disappointment with the slow progress of reform under President Chamoun. He is working hard to increase his following in the Chamber after new elections but it is hard to know how much of his influence is ideological and how much depends on his position as a Druze chieftain. He is closely interested in Asiatic currents of thought, particularly in Indian mysticism but at the same time he is quite a shrewd, practical politician whose social and economic theories, if extreme, are consistent and well argued. Although opposed to communism he was until recently inclined to neglect the dangers of his Left-wing neutralism; of late is showing signs of a positive pro-West

policy. While of uncouth appearance and a fiery demagogue in public, he has gentle and unassuming manners in private conversation. His devotion to his cause and his mystical practices are probably ruining his health, but while he lasts he is likely to remain one of the most interesting figures in the Lebanon.

60. Mlle. Ibtihaj Kaddoura

Born 1898, Beirut; Sunni Moslem. Leading member of various feminist organisations. Appointed municipal councillor February 1953. Honest and well meaning.

61. Georges Karam

Born 1897, Beirut; Maronite; educated Antoura College (Lazarists). Married. Rich timber merchant and large share-holder in Air Liban. Elected Deputy 1951 but failed in the 1953 elections. The fact that he was once imprisoned for a false Customs declaration has been conveniently forgotten and he was appointed Minister of Finance in 1953, when Sa'eb Salam was Prime Minister, and again in the Yafi Cabinet of March 19, 1956. Neither honest nor intelligent but shrewd at making money. Vain and mean but quite presentable socially.

62. Joseph Karam

Born 1899, Zghorta; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Tripoli. Married. The principal contender with Hamid Frangié for leadership of the Christians in North Lebanon. Deputy since 1944 but failed in the 1953 elections. Rather weak character.

63. Rifaat Kazoun

Born about 1908, Bekaa; Sunni Moslem; educated Lycée Français. Married. Ex-Deputy since 1943. Venal and a known arms smuggler, he is also a fanatical Moslem and was arrested in December 1952 for complicity in the murder of a Christian lawyer during municipal elections and subsequently acquitted. Is now on the Opposition side, meaning opposition to the person of the President and not to the Government in office.

64. Raschid Keramé

Born 1923, Tripoli; Sunni Moslem; has law degree from Cairo. Bachelor. Feudal leader who inherited political influence and prestige in Tripoli of his father, Abdel Hamid Keramé, but which he has not yet consolidated. Deputy since 1951; has served as Minister of Justice and National Economy. An ardent advocate of economic union with Syria, he has failed to achieve anything concrete. Weak, vain and moderately intelligent but honest and well meaning. Minister for National Economy and Social Affairs since August 1953. Prime Minister from September 1955 until March 1956. He showed himself obstinate and a fanatical Moslem in this office; he accomplished nothing of any value and showed strong Left-wing tendencies.

65. Charles Kettaneh

Born 1905, Jerusalem; Roman Catholic; educated American University of Beirut. Married to a charming and intelligent wife. Member of the important merchant firm of Kettaneh Frères. Although scrupulous in his personal dealings he is a tough and ruthless businessman. Has shrewd business sense but outside this field his judgment is fallible. Very wealthy and generous.

66. Joseph Khadige

Born 1900, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. President of the Merchants' Association. A strong and shrewd champion of Lebanon's commercial independence of her Moslem neighbours. Taciturn and straightforward.

Declared bankrupt in March 1956 in spite of great efforts by President of Republic to help him out of his difficulties.

67. Anoir Khatib

Born 1903, Shehim; Sunni Moslem; educated School of Law, Damascus. Formerly judge, then practised as lawyer. Prominent member of the Socialist Progressive Party of Kemal Joumlatt; ex-Deputy. Fairly intelligent and relatively honest.

68. Izzet Khourchid

Born 1902, Beirut (of family with Turkish origins); Sunni Moslem; educated Ottoman Government School, Beirut. Married. Chief of Protocol at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1945-52, with intervals as Chief of Police. Was Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs in 1955 until he was reappointed Chef de Protocole. Honest and civilised, he tends to be used to lend respectability to a Department which has lost face.

69. Sheikh Béchara el-Khoury

Born 1892, Beirut (with family origins in Mount Lebanon); Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Lawyer and politician. After bitter opposition to President Eddé and several terms as Prime Minister under French Mandate, he became the first independent President of the Lebanese Republic in 1943, and stood firmly against French pretensions in that year, being interned for his pains. Throughout his term of office he remained grateful for British support at that time. As President he showed great skill in manipulating the balance of political forces in the country and in thereby maintaining himself as the dominant factor in public life. But his inability to say "no" to his family (wife, brothers, son and remoter relatives) led to his régime becoming a synonym for corruption and nepotism. His increasingly blind self-confidence led him to resent and to try to suppress the criticism and clamour for reform and so brought him into conflict with the press and public opinion. During 1952 the opposition to him gradually gained momentum and forced him to resign in September, since when he has retired into private life, although reputed still to take a close, indirect interest in politics. In foreign affairs he had remained consistently pro-Western and anti-Communist throughout his term of office. His shortcomings as President derived mainly from weakness and inability to rise above the moral standards of those who surrounded him; but he had been a clever and successful lawyer; he conducted public business with efficiency and despatch and he is kindly and amiable in private contacts.

70. Elias Khoury

Born 1898, Mount Lebanon; Maronite; educated Collège de la Sagesse, Beirut. Married. Prominent in medical organisations and good works. Ex-Deputy and former Minister of Health. Honest and well meaning but, as far as his political ambitions go, rather a burnt-out volcano owing to his close connexions with President el-Khoury.

71. Emile Khoury

Born about 1887; Maronite; educated Collège de la Sagesse, Beirut. Bachelor. Journalist and diplomatist. Formerly foreign correspondent of Egyptian paper *El-Ahram*. Lebanese Minister at Rome 1948-53. Intelligent but not trusted.

72. Sheikh Fouad el-Khoury

Born 1894, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Wealthy merchant with a finger in almost every commercial pie. Brother of President el-Khoury whom he supported financially on the way up. During his brother's term of office greatly increased his already substantial fortune.

73. Sheikh Khalil el-Khoury

Born 1923; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married to the rich and charming former Jacqueline Arida, daughter of George Arida (No. 11). Elder son of President el-Khoury and member of his law firm. Made a large fortune by exploiting his privileged position during his father's presidency. Lay low for the first eighteen months or so of Chamoun's presidency, but is now steadily resuming his political intrigues. Separated from his wife in January 1955. He has since decided to lie rather low. He is well versed in the technique of corrupt political intrigue, but his methods are so tortuous that they tend to become transparent.

74. Sheikh Sami el-Khoury

Born 1895, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Brother of President el-Khoury. Formerly in Department of Justice. Secretary-General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1944-45. Lebanese Minister at Cairo 1945-52; at Brussels and The Hague from December 1952 until July 1955, when he was appointed Ambassador to Madrid. A neat little man with no great intelligence or personality.

75. Sheikh Selim el-Khoury

Born 1896, Rashmaya; Maronite; educated at Jesuit University, Beirut. Bachelor. Brother of President el-Khoury, during whose presidency he exercised great influence behind the scenes and came to be known as "the Sultan." Though he never attended the Chamber he controlled eleven votes there. He thus made himself one of the main targets of the reformers. Little is heard of him now and he is presumably resting on his tarnished laurels.

76. Victor Khoury

Born 1903, Hadeth; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut, and in Mexico. Bachelor whose sister acts as hostess. Formerly lawyer. In 1944 appointed Counsellor at Lebanese Legation at London; Minister in 1947 and Ambassador in 1953. Transferred to Washington in 1955. Not a very strong character but makes good use of his amiable social manners.

77. Salah Lababidi

Born 1896, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Civil Servant, formerly Subdistrict Governor (Kaimakam) of Baalbek. Appointed Chief of Police of Beirut, March 1953. Arabic scholar; honest and energetic; a great friend of Abdallah Yafi.

78. Selim Lahoud

Born 1912, Maronite. Chief engineer of the Water Company of Beirut. Studied engineering at the Ecole des Arts et Métiers of Lille, France. Elected Deputy of Mt. Lebanon in a by-election in April 1954. Honest and hard worker. Appointed 1954 chairman of Litani Board—for hydro-electric and irrigation development of resources of Lebanon's chief river. Appointed Minister of Public Education under the Premiership of Sami Solh in July 1955 and later Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Kerame Cabinet in September 1955. Was given the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and of Education in the Yafi Cabinet of March 19, 1956. Made more than one blunder while Minister for Foreign Affairs and the return of this important portfolio to him in the present Government caused surprise. He is reported to be in financial difficulties. Married. Friendly.

79. Subhi Mahmassani

Born 1908, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Lycée Français, American University of Beirut and French School of Law. Married. A judge until 1947 when

he resigned to stand unsuccessfully for Parliament. Now practises law; legal adviser to Point IV in the Lebanon. A clean and clever lawyer.

80. Charles Malik

Born 1906, North Lebanon; Greek Orthodox; educated American University of Beirut and Harvard. Married. Formerly professor of philosophy and science, American University of Beirut. As Lebanese Ambassador at Washington from 1945 to December 1955 and Permanent Representative at the United Nations, he attracted much attention by public speaking in the United States and built up for himself an influential position in Washington. His reputation in his own country also gained through his long absence from the scene. Has now returned to Beirut where he is once more on the staff of the American University. He has political ambitions.

81. Nasri Malouf

Born 1911, Mount Lebanon; Greek Catholic, educated Syrian School of Law of Damascus. Bachelor. Lawyer, journalist and politician. Prominent member of the National Appeal Party. Part-owner of *Al Jarida* newspaper; brilliant writer and orator in Arabic. Honest and proud of his independence but lazy. Susceptible to feminine influence.

82. Abdallah Mashnouq

Born 1899, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Journalist, formerly principal of the Moslem Makassed College of Beirut. Owns and edits *Beirut al-Massa*. Edits an excellent monthly magazine, *The Oil Family*, for the I.P.C., and arouses professional jealousy in so doing. A fanatic on the subject of Islam and a strong supporter of Syro-Lebanese union. Clever and a strong personality, but venal. Has certainly been bought with Saudi money and is now strongly advocating the Saudi-Egyptian policy. Speaks good English.

83. Badri Meoushi

Born 1902; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. President of the High Court since 1950. Only moderately clever but is honest and has proved independent of political influence as a judge.

84. Jamil Mikaoui

Born 1911, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Lycée Français, Beirut. Married to a French wife. Influential among younger Moslems and formerly leader of the Moslem nationalist Najjadel Party. Served at Lebanese Legation at London, and Minister at Berne from 1946 until 1953 when he resigned, stood for the 1953 elections and failed to be elected. He then devoted his attention to building up a lucrative legal practice and in September 1955 under R. Kerame was made Minister of Public Works and, later, acting Minister of Finance. He kept these portfolios until the Ministry fell in March 1956.

85. Moussa Mobarak

Born 1901, Antoura; Maronite; educated Lazarist College, Antoura. Married to an intelligent wife. Closely associated with the French Mandatory authorities 1923-41. Appointed "chef de Cabinet" to President el-Khoury 1943. In charge of Customs Department since 1944 except for an interlude from September 1952 to February 1953 when he was Minister for Foreign Affairs. Despite his French culture and connexions he is consistently friendly to the British and is honest and independent. He is almost unique in the Lebanon as having resigned a Ministerial portfolio on a point of principle. Although at first he succeeded in remaining on

friendly terms with both the ex-President Khoury and President Chamoun, his relations with the former soon deteriorated. For the last two years has been impatiently waiting for President Chamoun to fulfil his promise to appoint him Lebanese Ambassador in Paris but this appointment has not yet taken place, partly because of the Maronite Patriarch and partly because of the reported French desire not to see this ex-employee of theirs, although staunchly pro-French, hold such a position in their capital. Intelligent and good company, but given to talking too much and thus occasionally dropping bricks.

86. Moukhtar Moukaiech

Born 1901, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Bachelor. Formerly lawyer. Interned for pro-German activities 1942. Served diplomatic posts including Washington, Ankara and Ottawa. Appointed Consul-General at Marseilles in 1954. Appointed Lebanese Minister to Belgium and Holland in July 1955. Fanatical Moslem. Intelligent but restless and dissatisfied with his lot.

87. Saadi Mounla

Born 1895, Tripoli; Sunni Moslem; educated Ottoman Government School, Tripoli. Bachelor. Landowner and politician. Deputy and former Minister. Prime Minister in 1946. Appointed Co-Guardian of the Electricity Company of Beirut in 1953 and Chairman of the Electricity Company Board in 1954. A genial old muddle-head.

88. Kamel Mroueh

Born 1916; Shia Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Journalist; now editor of *Hayat* and *The Daily Star*. Broadcast from Berlin in the war. Violently nationalist. A clever and unscrupulous journalist. A useful ally but must be treated with caution. Speaks excellent English. An Arab union enthusiast. An outstanding supporter of the Bagdad Pact.

89. Gabriel Murr

Born 1895; Greek Orthodox; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Minister since August 1953. Served in United States Army in First World War. Returned to Lebanon in 1922 and became cinema proprietor. Deputy 1943-51-53. Several times Minister. Honest and well meaning.

90. Alfred Naccache

Born 1894, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Formerly lawyer and President of the Court of Appeal. President of the Lebanese Republic under French Mandate 1941-43 when dismissed by General Catroux. Deputy 1943-47, re-elected Deputy in 1953. A Minister for Foreign Affairs since August 1953. Has done some political journalism. He is much under Jesuit influence but his opposition to President el-Khoury commends him to President Chamoun who often consults him. He is absolutely honest but neither a strong character nor a capable administrator.

91. Georges Naccache

Born 1903, Alexandria; Maronite; educated Jesuit College, Alexandria. Married. Formerly civil engineer; now newspaper owner and journalist. Part-proprietor of *L'Orient* since 1924. Writes well and is clever; but gambles and is venal.

92. Adib Nahas

Born 1903, Tripoli; Greek Orthodox; educated Collège des Frères, Tripoli. Married. Government servant. Formerly Director-General of the Interior and Mohafez of South Lebanon. Lebanese Minister 51674

at Buenos Aires 1948-53, and now Minister at Rio de Janeiro. A first-rate official, honest, intelligent, capable and pro-British. O.B.E. 1947. Promoted to rank of Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro in March 1955.

93. General Souleiman Naufal

Born 1900, Merjayoun; Greek Catholic; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Served in the Lebanese Army under the French Mandate. Appointed head of the Gendarmerie 1941 and dismissed after collaborating with the French in November 1943. Formerly Director-General, Ministry of National Economy, and then Minister of National Economy 1947-48. Now controls the Capitale Cinema and does some journalism. Honest and capable, he believes strongly in maintaining the Christian position in the Lebanon if necessary by authoritarian methods.

94. Muhieddin Nsouli

Born 1900, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Journalist. Owns and edits newspaper *Beirut*. Former Deputy. Minister of Information under Sa'eb Salam from April until August 1953. Interned as Axis sympathiser 1941 but is now strong supporter of co-operation with the West against communism. Despite his Arab loyalties, is ready to take a moderate line on such things as Palestine and Middle East defence. Speaks English. Has visited England. Minister of Information and at different times of Finance and of Interior in Sami Solh's Government of 1954-55. Made serious efforts to reduce corruption and maladministration, especially at Finance Ministry. Health bad.

95. Mustapha Nsouli

Born 1916, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Wife does not go out. Civil Servant; joined Lebanese Administration in 1944 after working in his father's firm (glassware). Appointed Director-General of National Economy in February 1953. Honest and intelligent, but not a strong character. Speaks English and is in close touch with United States Embassy; but also most helpful to this embassy. Accompanied Lebanese President on his visit to South America in May 1954.

96. Adel Osseiran

Born 1903, Sidon; Shia Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Landowner and lawyer. Rival leader to Ahmed el-Assad in South Lebanon. Elected Speaker of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies in 1953 and re-elected in 1954 and in 1955. Close political associate of Camille Chamoun (now President) from 1943. Strong Arab nationalist, especially on Palestine, but friendly to Britain though only within the limitations of the above views. A strong character, blunt and uncompromising. Speaks excellent English.

97. Henri Pharaon

Born 1902, Beirut; Greek Catholic; educated privately and Jesuit University, Beirut. Widower. Banker, politician and race-horse owner, in ascending order of interest. Ex-Deputy and several times Minister, usually of Foreign Affairs. He is related to President el-Khoury under whose régime he established himself as one of the principal "robber barons." By lavish expenditure poses as champion of Christian lower classes in Beirut. Homosexual and not above employing gangsters or bribery, he represents the worst type of Middle Eastern politician with whom we have to deal. Nevertheless, although he is off the political stage for the time being, he believes in co-operation with the West and has spoken in favour of Middle East defence, but is strongly opposing the Bagdad Pact.

98. General Noureddine Rifai

Born about 1895, Tripoli; Sunni Moslem; educated Ottoman Government School, Beirut. Married. Served in the Gendarmerie. Formerly Mohafez of North Lebanon. Appointed Director of Internal Security Forces June 1952 until March 1953, when he was made Inspector-General only of the Internal Security Forces, being thus deprived of some prerogatives. An impressive little man but a firm, capable administrator. Homosexual.

99. Mme. Hélène Rihan

Born about 1907, Beirut; Greek Orthodox. Wife of Dr. Habib Rihan of American University of Beirut. A leading advocate of women's rights. Formerly taught in a school for girls in Cairo. Appointed municipal councillor February 1953.

100. Mohamed Sabra

Shia Moslem, born about 1913. Lawyer graduate of Jesuit School of Law. Was appointed Consul-General Dakar and subsequently promoted to Minister to Iran and Ambassador to Amman. At present Minister of Justice and Posts and Telegraphs and Information. Well liked in Shia circles. Capable and honest. Trusted by the President.

101. Negib Sadaka

Greek Catholic from Zahlé. Studied in Al-Charkieh School, Zahlé and obtained a degree in law from the French School at Beirut. Left for France, where he remained during the war and came back with a degree of doctor in law. Appointed to Minister for Foreign Affairs 1945. Later transferred as Director-General of Education. Retrained in December 1955 to Foreign Ministry as Assistant Secretary-General. Highly educated and honest. Visited United Kingdom as guest of British Council in 1955. Inclined towards socialism and progressionism. Married.

102. Abdel Rahman Sahmarani

Born 1903, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Jesuit University, Beirut, and the Sorbonne. Bachelor. His sister acts as his hostess. President of the Beirut Chamber of Commerce since 1949. A pompous bore, much given to lecturing Western representatives on how to conduct their policy so as to satisfy Arab aspirations, but unfortunately quite influential, particularly in a Pan-Arab direction.

103. Mohammed Salam

Born 1897, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Businessman. Runs the Moslem Makassad College and believes in British methods of education. Not a very inspiring personality but loyal to his British connexions. Speaks good English.

104. Saeb Salam

Born about 1902, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married to a charming and gentle wife. Brother of Mohammed Salam (No. 103). Politician and business man. Chairman, with a small personal holding, of Middle East Air Lines. Deputy in the 1943 and 1951 Chambers. Formerly Minister of the Interior. Prime Minister for a few days in September 1952 when he helped administer the *coup de grâce* to President el-Khoury. Again Prime Minister from April until August 1953. He has resumed his close links with the British owing to his association with B.O.A.C. A bit of an adventurer in politics and business but he is intelligent and forward looking and is likely to remain a prominent figure. During the last two years has definitely developed political inclinations

more favourable to Egypt than to Iraq. Appointed Minister of State in the Yafi Cabinet on March 19, 1956. Speaks excellent English. A leading supporter of the project to establish an English secondary school in Lebanon.

105. Anis Saleh

Born 1907, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Formerly Magistrate and Director-General of Justice. He made himself too useful to President el-Khoury and did not survive his fall. Now has a very good practice as a lawyer.

106. Joseph Salem

Born 1897, Tyre; Greek Catholic; educated Collège Patriarcal, Beirut. Married. Influential business man (mainly banking and insurance). Lebanese Minister at Cairo 1944-45. Minister of the Interior 1945-46. Without letting his relations with ex-President Khoury cool off, is now on close terms with President Chamoun and is usually well informed on what goes on behind the scenes. Although rather boorish at first sight he is usually friendly and co-operative and certainly has intelligence and independent judgment.

107. Colonel Toufiq Salem

Born 1904; Tyre; Greek Orthodox; educated Collège Patriarcal, Beirut. Married. Trained in the French army (as a contemporary of General Shishakli). Chief of Staff of the Lebanese Armed Forces since 1945. A brusque and quick-tempered officer who tends to fret under General Chehab's calmer methods but is fundamentally good-natured and helpful.

108. Fouad Sarrouf

Born 1906 in Cairo, of Lebanese origin; Greek Orthodox; educated at the American University of Beirut. Married to a pleasant wife born and brought up in Manchester. Journalist. Edited *Al-Mokattam* newspaper in Cairo, founded by his father. Wrote Roosevelt's life in Arabic. Appointed Vice-President (in charge of Public Relations) of American University of Beirut in 1952. Capable and honest.

109. Fouad Sawaya

Born 1909 at Zahlé. Greek Catholic. Educated at "College Patriarcal," Beirut. After being a judge for several years was appointed Mohafez of Mount Lebanon from 1944-46. Mohafez of South Lebanon, 1947-49. Director of Communications and Transport, 1949-55. Director-General of Education, December 1955. Bachelor. Honest and a capable civil servant but conceited.

110. Mohammed Shoucair

Born 1912, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated American University of Beirut. Married. Politician and journalist. Member of the tiny but vocal National Appeal Party. Was a disciple and great admirer of late Riad Solh. Clever, ambitious and honest by Lebanese standards but loyal to his friends. Visited England 1952.

111. Sami Shoucair

Born 1923, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated Jesuit University, Beirut, and studied electrical engineering in the United States. Bachelor. Director of Civil Aviation in the Lebanon from 1950 until 1953 when he was dismissed and charged with illegal handling of the Civil Aviation budget; his case is still *sub judice*. Although born wealthy, would not miss an opportunity of making money. His main interests are women and money and he is unscrupulous and energetic in pursuit of these objectives.

112. Abdel Karim Sibahi

Born 1887, Hama, Syria; Sunni Moslem; educated in Istanbul. A merchant with real estate in Germany where he spent the years of World War II when he was well-known for his pro-Nazi sympathies. Having been appointed a municipal councillor at the request of Abdallah Yafi, he was elected President of the Municipality in February 1953 and re-elected in 1955; resigned in 1956. Lacks energy and experience in administration. Involved in two administrative municipal scandals in 1951 in regard to building a slaughter-house and the aerodrome.

113. Alfred Skaf

Born 1907, Zahlé; Greek Catholic; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. A powerful figure in the Bekaa but off the political stage since an unsuccessful term as Minister of Supply in 1943.

114. Jean Skaf

Born 1908, Zahlé; Greek Catholic; educated at Zahlé. Bachelor. Leading member of the Phalange in the Bekaa. Ex-Deputy and former Minister. Intelligent and ambitious. Friendly.

115. Joseph Skaff

Greek Catholic from Zahlé. Born about 1918. Speaks some English and French. Elected Deputy for South Lebanon in 1947 and is now Deputy for Zahlé and Minister of Agriculture. Popular leader of the Bekaa group of Deputies. Weak character. Although a rich land-owner, owes large sums of money to bank.

116. Kazem Solh

Born 1903, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Istanbul, Damascus and French School of Law, Beirut. Married. President of the National Appeal Party. Lebanese Minister at Bagdad since 1947, promoted to the rank of Ambassador in 1953. Intelligent and ambitious.

117. Sami Solh

Born 1891, Sidon; Sunni Moslem; educated Istanbul Government College. Widower. Son of a Turkish official. Formerly Magistrate and President of the High Court. Prime Minister 1942-43, 1945-46 and 1952, when he resigned in protest against President el-Khoury's attempt to throw upon him the blame for corruption in public life. He retains considerable influence with the lower Moslem classes in Beirut, but although amiable and well meaning is too vain and too weak to follow any consistent line of thought or policy for very long. Again Prime Minister from September 1954 to September 1955; visited Turkey with President in April 1955 and headed Lebanese delegation to Bandoeng Conference in April 1955.

118. Takiyeddin Solh

Born 1910, Saida; Sunni Moslem; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Bachelor. Cousin of late Riad Solh and nephew of Sami Solh (No. 117). Arab nationalist with political ambitions; dabbles in journalism. Failed in 1953 elections. Prominent member of National Appeal Party. Formerly Counsellor of Lebanese Legation at Cairo; later in Secretariat of Arab League. Very intelligent and relatively honest, but given to intrigues.

119. Georges Tabet

Born 1891, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Several times Minister. Has some influence in Maronite circles but is rather a contemptible old man out-classed by his wife.

120. Jacques Tabet

Born 1887, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. A rich socialite and land-owner who keeps in the social swing but has no political significance.

121. Mme. Laure Tabet

Born 1896, Alexandria; Maronite; educated at Roman Catholic College for Girls, Alexandria. Wife of Georges Tabet (No. 119.). Having no children, diverted her energies into feminist activities in and outside Lebanon, notably Red Cross and International Council of Women. Appointed municipal councillor, February 1953. Highly civilised and speaks good English.

122. Maurice Tabet

Born 1919, Beirut; Maronite; educated at Jesuit University, Beirut. Son of Jacques Tabet (No. 120). Married to an attractive Canadian girl. Joined Lebanese Foreign Service in 1947; served in New York and Ottawa. Since 1952 Assistant Chief of Protocol. Nice manners but little experience. Speaks good English.

123. Bahige Takiyeddin

Born 1908, Baaklin; Druze; educated Collège Patriarcal, Beirut. Married. Lawyer and politician. Deputy; formerly Minister of Agriculture. A loyal adherent of the Arslan faction and of President el-Khoury, whose spokesman he has often been in the Chamber.

124. Khalil Takiyeddin

Born 1905, Baaklin; Druze; educated Collège Patriarcal, Beirut. Married. Civil Servant, and Arabic poet. Served mainly in the Secretariat of the Chamber until appointed Lebanese Minister at Moscow and Stockholm 1946-53 when he became Minister to Mexico. Clever and socially presentable but servile and venal. Like the rest of his family, an opportunist. A leading figure in the pro-Egyptian set. Appointed Ambassador to Cairo December 1955.

125. Philippe Takla

Born 1914; Greek Catholic; educated Collège des Lazaristes, Antoura. Married to a rich Lebanese of Brazil by virtue of whose fortune he has acquired a certain independent standing. Lawyer and politician. Ex-Deputy and loyal supporter of President el-Khoury. Several times Minister for Foreign Affairs. He is intelligent and in most respects honest and has pleasant manners. He is quick on the uptake and easy to deal with on matters of business. Friendly and helpful to this embassy. Represented Lebanese President at ceremonies held in Uruguay on the taking of office of Uruguayan President in February 1955.

126. Colonel Fauzi Traboulsi

Born 1901, Deir el-Kamar; Maronite; educated Collège des Frères, Beirut. Married. Served Lebanese Gendarmerie, later in command of Internal Security Forces. Once a personal friend of President Chamoun, has not been for the last two years on speaking terms with the President, with whom he is angry for not appointing him an Ambassador somewhere. Honest and loyal but tactless, vain, pompous, excitable and of mediocre intelligence.

127. Gabriel Trad

Born 1893, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. A rich socialite who enjoys parties but is also generous and prominent in charitable organisations. Honest and likeable but with no pretensions to intelligence, although he has travelled widely.

128. André Tueni

Born 1910, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated Collège des Frères, Tripoli. Married. Civil Servant. Formerly Director-General of Finance, now Director-General of Public Works. Relatively honest, hard worker and capable but an unattractive creature. Unpopular with his subordinates.

129. Ghassan Tueni

Born 1926, Beirut; Greek Orthodox; educated at the American University of Beirut and then studied journalism at Harvard University, United States. Journalist and politician. Prominent member of the P.P.S.; Deputy since 1951. Educated, ambitious and energetic. Relatively honest. The typical young man with great possessions but Left-wing inclinations. Speaks excellent English and visited England 1951. Ex-Deputy President, Chamber of Deputies. Married in January 1955 the daughter of Mohammed Aly Hamade, a Druze, without having to change his religion. One of the few Deputies prepared to stand up publicly for the Western connection.

130. Charles Tyan

Born 1900, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Civil Servant employed in Ministry of Public Works 1943-52 where he acquired wide expert knowledge of oil and transport. Now out of a regular job. Undoubtedly very corrupt but helpful to the I.P.C. Secretary to the Conseil de Planification et Développement Economique.

131. Abdallah Yafi

Born 1899, Beirut; Sunni Moslem; educated Jesuit University, Beirut, and in France. Married. Lawyer and politician. Several times Minister, Prime Minister 1936 and again 1951-52 and 1953-54. Formed the Present Cabinet on March 19, 1956. A comparatively honest politician who grew increasingly resolute under President el-Khoury's régime. Well intentioned and friendly but rather dull and colourless. Opposed Bagdad Pact.

132. Simon Zouein

Born 1910, Beirut; Maronite; educated Jesuit University, Beirut. Married. Served all his life in Gendarmerie; now head of it with rank of colonel. Honest and loyal.

133. Constantin Zurak

Born 1908, Damascus; Greek Orthodox; educated American University of Beirut and United States. Married. Professor at American University of Beirut; then president of Syrian University, Damascus, which post he relinquished in 1952 to become vice-president of the American University of Beirut (Administration). Nationalist; honest and capable.

Obituary

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Maronite**1. Monseigneur Antoine Abed**

Born 1901, Archbishop of Tripoli since 1931. Closely associated with the French but friendly to this embassy. Also interested in commerce.

2. Monseigneur Augustin Boustani

Born 1872, Deir el-Kamar. Archbishop of South Lebanon residing at Beit-Iddin. He comes of a leading Maronite family and is intelligent and well educated but shows no friendliness to the British.

3. Monseigneur Pierre Dib

Born about 1885. Archbishop of Cairo but lives mainly at the Patriarch's seat at Bkerké. Learned and reputedly virtuous. A member of the commission which conducts the Patriarch's affairs and a possible successor to him.

4. Monseigneur Elias Farah

A Maronite, formerly Archimandrite representing the Maronite Patriarch in Alexandria (Wakil Patriarch). Aged 48. Studied at the Jesuit School in Beirut. A good speaker in Arabic and comes from South Lebanon, Kfarbo'hum. Appointed Maronite Archbishop of Cyprus in May 1954.

5. His Beatitude Patriarch Boulos Meouschi

Born 1892, Jezzín. After living many years in the United States, was Archbishop of Tyr. Was Chairman of Apostolic Commission to manage the affairs of the Patriarchate during the extreme old age of Patriarch Arida. Appointed exceptionally, by papal decree instead of being elected by a Council of Bishops—Patriarch in 1955 on death of

Patriarch Arida. Has shown himself a strong and able leader who has made himself popular also with Moslem leaders. Speaks English.

6. Monseigneur Ignace Mobarak

Born 1876; studied at Rome. Appointed Archbishop of Beirut 1919. A vigorous champion of the civic rights of the Maronite community, but apt to become quarrelsome. He several times offered his resignation and was surprised and shocked when the Pope accepted it suddenly in 1952. Has now retired to his native village of Rashmaya, Mount Lebanon.

7. Monseigneur Abdallah Noujaim

Maronite, born 1904 at Baalbek. Studied for a short period in Rome. For the last few years has been partly in charge of the Maronite Community in Baalbek. During the British occupation (1941-45) always entertained very good relations with the British military authorities. Is now on the Patriarch's staff at Bkerké.

8. Monseigneur Ignace Ziadé

Born 1906. Archbishop of Aleppo 1945 and Beirut 1952. An educated and pleasant personality who is also a member of the commission managing the Patriarchate. In private conversation very ready to advocate the need for a strong Western policy in the Middle East.

Greek Catholic**9. Monseigneur Philippe Nabaa**

Born about 1905; studied at Rome. Now Archbishop of Beirut. A genial and cultivated prelate who shows friendliness to this embassy and looks generally Westward.

10. Monseigneur Maximos Sayegh

Born 1878, Aleppo. Archbishop of Tyre 1917 and of Beirut 1933, and Patriarch since 1947. Popular among his small community. Anti-Communist and believes in the need for Western support of the Christian position in the Lebanon.

Greek Orthodox**11. Monseigneur Elie Karam**

Born 1896. Archbishop of Mount Lebanon, living just outside Beirut. Maintains friendly relations with all foreigners but generally regarded as a Communist sympathiser and known to have close connexions with the Soviet Legation (e.g., he celebrated a mass for the repose of Stalin's soul).

12. Monseigneur Elie Saliby

Born 1876. Archbishop of Beirut since 1935. A smooth-tongued ecclesiastic. Despite his professions of friendship with Britain has close contacts with the Cypriot supporters of Enosis with Greece. But he is a tough element of resistance to the all too pervasive communism in the Greek Orthodox Church.

Syrian Catholic**13. Cardinal Gabriel I^{er} Tappouni**

Born 1879, Mosul. Consecrated Bishop 1913; Archbishop of Aleppo 1921; Patriarch 1929; Cardinal 1933. Worked closely with the French who supported him during the Mandate as a counterpoise to the Maronites. A strong champion of Christian rights in Lebanon and Syria. Despite his pro-French reputation makes friendly gestures to this embassy.

Armenian Catholic**14. Cardinal Grégoire Pierre XV Agagianian**

Born 1895, Tiflis; studied at Rome. Ordained 1917; consecrated Bishop 1935; Patriarch of Armenian Catholics throughout the world 1937; appointed Cardinal 1945. A cultivated man of small stature but imposing presence. Speaks English and is in touch with English-speaking Catholics throughout the world. Despite his Russian origins, a vigorous opponent of communism, and unites in his person many opponents of East and West (political, ecclesiastical and geographical) and is therefore generally regarded, perhaps somewhat optimistically, as *papabile*.

Armenian Orthodox**15. His Beatitude Patriarch Zareh Paylasian, Catholicos of Cilicia**

Elected in 1956 despite opposition from a delegation from Russian Armenia led by Catholicos Vasken I of Echmiadzin. A strong Tashnaq, not well supported by other factions among the Armenians—at time of writing (April 1956) he has been able to find only two of the three bishops necessary to consecrate him. A strong character.

16. Monseigneur Khoren Paroyan

Born about 1905, Cyprus. Came to the Lebanon at the age of 15 and is now Archbishop of the Lebanon. He remains a British subject and still visits his parents every year in Cyprus. He is a friendly individual of no great intellectual stature. Said to have been antagonised by the Tashnaq (right-wing) tactics at the election of the Cilician Catholicos in February 1956.

Jew**17. Benzion Lechtman**

Born about 1891 in Poland. Came to Beirut 1935 and has acted as Rabbi since 1948. Even the Jewish community regard him as colourless. Acting Grand Rabbi in Lebanon of Jewish community.

Sunni Moslem**18. Sheikh Mohammed Alaya**

Born 1883, Beirut; primary education only, but after many years in religious courts is experienced in Shia law. Twice married and twice divorced. Appointed Mufti of the Lebanese Republic 1952 as a result of pressure on President el-Khoury by Abdallah Yafi and the Salam family. Honest but weak and unintelligent.

Shia Moslem**19. Sayed Abdel Hussein Sharafeddin**

Born about 1867; studied at Najaf, the Shia holy place in Iraq. Now chief of the Shia community in the Lebanon. Violently anti-Christian and anti-Western but honest and much respected by his community.

20. Sheikh Hussein el-Khatib

Shia Moslem Qadi at present acting as head of the Shia Jafari Shari Court in Beirut.

Druze

21. Sheikh Mohamed Abo Chakra

Sheikh Akl of the Druze Community elected in the summer of 1948; about 55 years old; married and lives at Amatour. Sheikh Mohamed is not of a high education but a good speaker. Before his election he was the owner of a garage of transport in Damascus. He is regarded as a "foster child" of Kamal Jumblatt. He is shrewd and a practical Druze, not over his religion, but over his Druze internal political party.

22. Sheikh Raschid Hamadeh

Sheikh Akl of the Druze Community elected in September 1954; about 60 years old; married and

an inhabitant of Baaklin. Sheikh Rashid is a *licencié en droit* from the French School of Law in Beirut. He comes from a leading Druze family. Once a magistrate in the Lebanese Court of Appeal, but dismissed on the charge of accepting a bribe; he was in fact caught red-handed by Fuad Ammoun, then his chief.

23. Mokadem Ali Mizher

Born 1896. Cousin of Kemal Joumblatt. Formerly a lawyer with political ambitions. He was appointed Kadi of the Druzes in Lebanon in 1945. He speaks English and professes the traditional Druze friendship for the British but is probably a rather sly intriguer.

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